Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

75¢

Russian tourist refiles lawsuit vs DOL. PAGE 3

TSL Foundation backs programs for women, kids. PAGE 7

NEW CAMPUS IS COMING

Demolition of some of Northern Marianas College's damaged buildings have begun as part of the college's effort to build new facilities. The college said the new buildings will be resilient and energy-efficient. The college lost many facilities during Super Typhoon Yutu in October 2018. The demolition of the damaged buildings is made possible through funding from the U.S. Department of Education.

NMC

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FRIDAY OCTOBER 9, 2020
www.saipantribune.com
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6-month stay on CBF OK'd

» IPI request to make a payment plan for $15.5M casino license fee is denied

FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The Commonwealth Lottery Commission yesterday took out from its agenda Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC's proposal to pay the $15.5 million annual casino license fee in installments, but allowed IPI to defer for six months its payment of the $20-million community benefit fund.

See CBF on Page 4

RELATED NEWS

➤ 'At this point, what bargaining power does IPI have?' PAGE 9

AT A GLANCE

As of 6pm, Oct. 8, 2020

GUAM	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	2,868	66	2,934
Recovered	1,924	143	2,067
Active	744	66	810
Deaths	57	1	58
Cumulative Number of Persons Tested			54,261

SAIPAN	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	75	0	75
Deaths	2	0	2
Cumulative Number of Persons Tested			19,345*

*Total count includes the number of persons tested on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota. With guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, CHCC has opted not to report active and recovered cases. The community-based testing has been temporarily suspended.

Source: Joint Information Center - Guam, Commonwealth Health Care Corp.

New XO Market reopens

By JUSTINE NAUTA
justine_nauta@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The New XO Market opened its doors a day and a half after correcting violations that caused the Environmental Health Disease Prevention to temporarily shut the store down last Oct. 6.

According to a source who agreed to speak on the condition that they not be identified, the store's violation was that they did not

See NEW XO on Page 4

Rose P. Camacho, 47

By JUSTINE NAUTA
justine_nauta@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The CNMI Scholarship Office is mourning the passing of its administrator, Rose Pangelinan Camacho, who passed away yesterday on Saipan. She was 47 years old. There was no immediate word on the cause of her death.

Camacho

This November would have been Camacho's eighth year with the CNMI Scholarship Office. A close friend who asked not to be named described her as a champion and a trailblazer for students, always looking for more scholarship opportunities for them.

See CAMACHO on Page 4

Hawaii pushes forward with tourism despite safety fears

A man sits on a nearly empty Waikiki Beach in Honolulu, Friday, Oct. 2, 2020.

AP

HONOLULU (AP)—Despite increasing coronavirus cases across the U.S., Hawaii officials hope to reboot tourism next week by loosening months of economically crippling pandemic restrictions, including a mandatory 14-day quarantine for all arriving travelers.

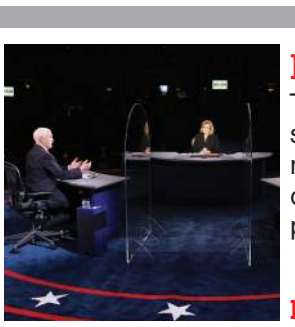
The plan, which was postponed after the virus surged in the summer, will

See HAWAII on Page 4

INSIDE

BUSINESS
There are many Korean barbecue joints on Saipan. And then there's Chun Ji Korean Restaurant.

PAGE 14



NATION
The VP debate dissects the Trump administration's handling of the coronavirus pandemic.

PAGE 15

ASIA
A senior North Korea diplomat who vanished in Italy in late 2018 now lives in South Korea.

PAGE 16

SCAN ME WITH A COMPATIBLE QR READER TO KEEP UPDATED ON ALL THE LATEST NEWS.

GOT A NEWS TIP? TEL: 235-6397 / 235-2440 FAX: 235-3740 EMAIL: editor@saipantribune.com

Local

Scheduled water service interruption on Capital Hill

There will be a scheduled water service interruption scheduled for Monday, Oct. 12, 2020, from 8am to 12pm for customers in the following areas: Capital Hill 1200 Block, Isa Drive from the Retirement Building south toward the Kagman Road intersection to include the Talafofo and Egigi Drive.

This is due two service lateral leaks located in the Marshall Loop area across the former Esco's Bakery. Water operators of the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. will be performing leak repairs in efforts to minimize non-revenue water loss. Water service to the affected areas will resume soon after.

For the safety of the men and women at the jobsite, proceed with caution and/or take alternative routes when travelling by the area.

Meanwhile, some portions of Saipan experienced an emergency power service interruption yesterday that occurred at 9:22am, which affected Kiya 2, 3, 4 and Feeder 4 and Feeder 7.

The cause of the outage was due to an overcurrent ground as a result of high voltage conductors making contact in the high winds on Chalan Monsignor Guerrero Road fronting the Kiya Substation and tripping the Kiya 3 Circuit. This vault inevitably triggered a low frequency and disconnected the Aggreko Power Plant, tripping Feeder 4 and 7, which includes Lower Base, Sadog Tasi, Capital Hill, As Quina (Wireless), Mt. Tapochao, Talafofo, 1-Denni, Agag, As Teo, Papago, entire Kagman, Lower Base, Tanapag, As Mahetog, Achugao, San Roque, As Matuis, Marpi, As Lito, Chalan Monsignor Martinez Road, Toftotville, Koblerville, Afetnas, San Antonio, Fina Sisu and Chalan Piao, Gualo Rai, Chinatown, Garapan and Chalan Kiya. Power to the affected areas were fully restored at around 10:30am yesterday morning after CUC operators were able to re-energize the engines.

Water and wastewater services were not affected during this outage. CUC operators are currently monitoring the power plant's engines and are working with the Power Division on scheduling an emergency power outage for the proper installation of the inefficiently installed distribution lines that caused the power outage yesterday. Updates will follow as soon as they are available.

CUC continues to work diligently to minimize any inconvenience to its customers. For more information, contact the CUC Customer Call Center (664-4282) or monitor our Facebook page for the latest updates (https://www.facebook.com/CommonwealthUtilitiesCorporation/). ***(PR)***

Candidates at a Glance

The Saipan Tribune will be coming out with a supplement,

#voteCNMI

in October 29 featuring candidates in the November election.

Spread your message to reach the people WHO VOTE.

Reserve your spot now!

For more information, please call 235-8747 and look for **Beth**, **Donna** or **Alyssa**

Hafa Adai! Saipan Tribune
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Russian tourist refiles lawsuit vs DOL

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
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REPORTER

A Russian tourist whose suit was initially denied by the U.S. District Court for the NMI for lack of jurisdiction has refiled his lawsuit against the CNMI Department of Labor and his employer.

Denis Uvarov, a Russian tourist, is again asking the District Court of the NMI to intervene in the labor complaint he filed against Saipan Security Services, a security firm that employed him back in 2018.

Uvarov's suit was dismissed last month because of lack of jurisdiction and because it was written in Russian.

District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona Manglona said that, aside from the complaint being written mostly in Russian, the amount in dispute did not appear anywhere near the threshold amount of over $75,000 required for jurisdiction.

Uvarov refiled his complaint last week, this time in English, and requested the court to award him $79,399 in damages. Uvarov named Osman Gani, operator and owner of Saipan Security Services, as his defendant. Uvarov wants the court to find Gani liable to pay him compensation for the actual work that he did plus overtime. Uvarov said the court should also find Gani liable for his suffering and harm to his health, caused by Gani's alleged illegal actions.

According to his complaint, Gani offered Uvarov a job as a security guard back in Oct. 8, 2018, which he said he accepted because he needed money as his application for asylum was still pending. Uvarov said he agreed to Gani's proposal of $5 per hour and was told to start work the following day.

Uvarov claims he was forced to work illegally to "not die of hunger and not live on the street," as he stated in his complaint.

Uvarov added that Gani would usually pick him up for work and drop him home. Several times, Gani gave Uvarov money for taxi but there were times Uvarov was forced to pay his fare himself without reimbursement

Uvarov said that he became homeless on Oct. 24-25, 2018, after Super Typhoon Yutu hit the island, but that he continued to work for three more days for Gani.

Uvarov said he contacted Gani several times regarding the compensation that Gani promised him but Gani did not take any action. Uvarov said the last time he reminded Gani about his salary was on Dec. 10, 2018.

Two weeks later, Uvarov filed a complaint against Gani with the CNMI Department of Labor. Uvarov said in his labor complaint that Gani owed him unpaid wages totaling 166 hours, from Oct. 9, 2018, to Oct. 28, 2018.

However, CNMI DOL dismissed his complaint stating that Uvarov is a tourist and is neither a U.S. citizen, a CNMI permanent resident, nor a foreign national worker or a worker possessing some other non-immigrant status.

According to Uvarov, CNMI DOL should consider him an asylum-seeker, not a tourist.

Marianas to see a rainy weekend

The Marianas is expected to experience a rainy weekend due to a surface trough that will produce scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms.

As of 6pm yesterday, the National Weather Service in Tiyan, Guam, reported that moderate east winds will prevail through today before decreasing and turning to the south Saturday.

Combined seas of 4 to 6 feet will continue through Monday with an upper-level low to produce isolated thunderstorms through tonight. A surface trough will produce scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms Saturday and Sunday.

From Friday through Saturday the weather is expected to be cloudy with isolated showers and thunderstorms. East winds will reach 10 to 15 mph becoming light in the evening. Highs around 88. Lows near 77.

On Saturday night through Sunday mostly cloudy weather is expected, with scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms and light and variable winds with lows around 76.

From Monday night through Thursday, expect partly cloudy weather with scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms. ***(Kimberly Bautista)***

Chamber meeting turns into 'Coffee with 2020 Saipan Senate candidates'

By BEA CABRERA
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CORRESPONDENT

The Saipan Chamber of Commerce's virtual monthly general membership meeting last Wednesday also served as a chance for Chamber members to meet and hear two of Saipan's senatorial candidates: incumbent Sen. Sixto Igisomar (R-Saipan) and former Labor secretary Edith Deleon Guerrero of the Democratic Party

Igisomar

In what was billed as "Coffee with 2020 Saipan Senate Candidates," the two shared their views on the state of the CNMI economy, workforce, the pandemic, and other issues, plus their mandates if ever they are elected.

Igisomar said his work in the Senate and current platform is an offshoot of his work as a former Commerce secretary.

"I have devoted my time as a senator to expand economic industries, work hard for businesses, and to help investors thrive in our economy …The management of our economy is the most important priority of our Commonwealth and it requires a comprehensive community approach that includes homes, villages, non-governmental organizations, private sector, and federal partners," he said.

"Now more than ever we need everyone… helping small businesses should also be a priority… 'Think big, start small' this should be our theme to stabilize the economy. …We need to diversify our economy. …Let's go back to basics—agriculture, fishing, and work on 'one island, one product' mentality. Although we are faced with a pandemic, we need to make things work so we will have a sustainable community," he added.

For her part, Deleon Guerrero's platform works around proper, good, and sound financial management in government.

"The current situation is not the best for our Commonwealth. …We need to spur the economy and create an environment that will promote economic stability and take care of the needs of the people. …We have a lot of federal money that came in from the U.S. government like the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance…and Paycheck Protection Program. For PUA, we need to accelerate the process of releasing them so we can give it out to the community and help spur more consumer spending and the will also help businesses," she said. "…We need to encourage stakeholders like the Commonwealth Development Authority to roll out funding for small businesses or even existing businesses for much-needed working capital to keep them going until we get out of this COVID-19 situation," she added.

Deleon Guerrero

Deleon Guerrero is no stranger to public service. She served as Labor secretary until she left the post in 2017. As a private citizen, she manages her own business and has immense experience in banking and insurance.

When asked what they think the biggest challenge of the islands is, Igisomar said it would be labor and immigration. "These are not under our control and up to now, I am still baffled on how we can achieve a sound economy with so much limitations in our much-needed labor force…the labor issue has impacted our hospital… Unlike the U.S. and other nations, we are expected to rely on our local workforce to stimulate the economy… there should be no room for poverty, unemployment…we are expected to be perfect… which I find unfair because as a young territory, we have a lot of work ahead of us."

"The learning curve to replace foreign workers has been challenging and costly for the community and businesses. The labor issue has impacted the nurses in our hospital, construction, rebuilding, skilled workers for CUC, and so on. We do have training and support from DOL, Northern Marianas College, Northern Marianas Trade Institute, Latte Training, but the output from our local and federal partners is falling short. These are the things we need to work on," he added.

Deleon Guerrero said there will never be an end on the need for training. "The need to continuously fund the education system should not exclude NMTI. …NMTI is a trade school. …Not everyone will go to academic [schools] so we need to look at the opportunity to start training programs and pump money to training plumbers, construction workers, masons, electricians, etc. as these areas of significant training and skill building. This will also encourage entrepreneurship."

"People keep taking about that there's no money but again it takes us back to when we had money and what happened to all the money? We will always need workforce development to access foreign workers to help our economy but we need to first invest in human capital," she added.

HAWAII

From Page 1

allow Hawaii-bound travelers who provide negative virus test results within 72 hours of arrival to sidestep two weeks of quarantine.

But the Oct. 15 launch of the pre-travel testing program is causing concern for some who say gaps in the plan could further endanger a community still reeling from summer infection rates that spiked to 10% after local restrictions eased.

State Sen. Glenn Wakai, chair of the Committee on Economic Development, Tourism and Technology, said one problem is that the tests are not mandatory for all. Travelers can still choose to not get tested and instead quarantine for two weeks upon arrival, which means those with a negative test could get infected on the plane.

"They're going to come here with this false sense of belief that, 'Hey, I got tested, Hawaii, I'm clean. Here's my paperwork. Let me enjoy my Hawaiian vacation,' not knowing that the person in seat B on a five-hour flight gave them the coronavirus," Wakai said.

Hawaii has lived under quarantine laws for months, but hundreds—at times thousands—of people have arrived daily since the pandemic started. Some have flouted safety measures, leading to arrests and fines for the scofflaws.

Before the pandemic, the state received about 30,000 visitors a day.

If the islands face another coronavirus surge because of a hasty return to tourism, another lockdown could spell economic disaster, Wakai said.

He said the state has mismanaged the pandemic from the beginning. Hawaii's state epidemiologist and its director of health both left their positions in September after concerns were raised about their handling of the virus and the state's contact tracing efforts.

Wakai also worries that reopening tourism before children are safely back in school could challenge parents who return to work in the tourism industry.

But others view the pre-travel testing plan as the best way to add a layer of protection while kickstarting the economy. Hawaii has had one the nation's highest unemployment rates since the start of the pandemic, which ground to a halt nearly all vacation-related activity.

BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUT

To our wonderful boss, Ma'am Susan Macario, happy birthday! Greetings come from your Shirley's Coffee Shop family.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

CBF

From Page 1

Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC chief executive officer Donald R. Browne explains IPI's proposals to the Commonwealth Lottery Commission, from right, commissioner Robert Guerrero, chair Mark O. Rabauliman, and commissioner David DLG Atalig, at the CLA hearing in the governor's office's conference room yesterday morning.

FERDIE DE LA TORRE

At the CLC meeting at the Office of the Governor's conference room on Capital Hill, CLC chair Mark O. Rabauliman said that IPI made nine requests, but the commission would only entertain the community benefit fund matter because the other IPI proposals are covered by law or need legislative action and review by the Commonwealth Casino Commission.

CLC commissioners David DLG Atalig and Robert Guerrero agreed with Rabauliman to amend the agenda to remove the other IPI proposals, including the proposal for IPI to pay the $15.5 million annual casino license fee via installments for two years.

After discussions with other commissioners and their legal counsel, assistant attorney general John P. Lowrey, Atalig moved to entertain the postponement of the payment of $20 million in CBF due in October 2020 for six months due to "force majeure." That refers to unforeseeable circumstances that prevent someone or a business from fulfilling a contract. The three commissioners unanimously voted in favor for the deferment.

Earlier in the meeting, Atalig moved to grant IPI's proposal to pay the $15.5 million in installments due to "force majeure," but he later withdrew that motion after Lowrey advised that CLC has no authority over the matter.

Atalig initially did not agree with that opinion. This prompted Rabauliman to call for a recess to discuss the issue further with Lowrey and the other commissioners.

Lowrey said the CLC is capable of applying the "force majeure" clause to the community development fund liability for October 2020. "The force majeure clause goes up to six months," he said.

In accepting the "force majeure" argument, it would be possible for the CLC to attach some requirements to it, Lowrey said, but that they would have to be very careful, to be very clear on what those requirements are.

"And I don't think we have a clear proposal before the commission today to be able to vote on what those requirements would be," he added.

Lowrey noted that it would be within the CLC's power if it decides to apply the "force majeure" to the October 2020 liability to then use that six months for negotiation or further discussion of an amendment for a broader restructuring of the CBF.

In IPI's request for amendment No. 9 of the casino license agreement, IPI chief executive officer Donald Browne proposed, among other things, to postpone payment of the 2020 community benefit fund due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Browne proposed that any CBF that are past due be paid back for development of infrastructure such as road, sewer, public schools, and social benefit projects, subject to the approval of both the CNMI government and IPI—provided, however, that any request for such payment of overdue CBF will not be made within three years immediately after the approval of the proposal.

He said the annual CBF payments in the amount of $20 million will resume upon the first full year of operation of the first hotel on the Marpi land.

At the hearing, some persons, including Rep. Tina Sablan (D-Saipan), spoke against granting IPI's requests.

As for IPI's payment plan proposal for the annual casino license fee, Rabauliman said in a later interview that Lowrey advised them that that's something that's already in the law and that the CLC can CLC can do nothing about.

Rabauliman said they then moved on to the deferment of the community benefit fund.

"But, you know, even with that, we got clarification on…the length of a deferment that is allowable under the casino license agreement," he said.

Rabauliman said he mentioned that the community benefit fund is tied indirectly to having the room counts in the integrated gaming facility be counted toward the 2,000 rooms that is required by law.

Rabauliman said he is hoping that IPI will use this time to start paying off what is needed, so that the suffering of some in the community can be relieved.

"So that being said, we're just trying to give them a fair shake. At the end of the day, that's what they're asking. Unfortunately, we couldn't provide everything. But with that, hopefully it does give them some sort of relief," the chairman said.

At the hearing, Browne said IPI needs a commitment from the government about the exclusive casino agreement. Browne said it is undisputed that there exists casino gambling devices outside the casino, and that IPI is actually being taken advantage of.

Atalig said the purpose of deferring or postponing the $20 million CBF will allow IPI to use this money to finish the casino resort project. "That my goal is that they finish this and we avoid having an unfinished facility in Garapan," Atalig said.

According to IPI's latest proposal, the base amount of the annual casino license fee will remain at $15 million and that it will pay $7.75 million within 10 days after the CLC's approval of its request to amend the casino license agreement, and pay the remaining $7.75 million on Feb. 12, 2021.

The casino license agreement adjusts the annual casino license fee from $15 million in Years 1 to 5 to $15.5 million in Years 6 to 10. This year is the 6th.

Browne said payment of the full $15.5 million casino license fee per year will resume in January 2022.

NEW XO

From Page 1

comply with labeling regulations, which the source described as not a major violation.

Public Law 11-40 defines "label" to include any legend, word, or mark attached to, included in, belonging to, in close proximity to, or accompanying any food, drug, cosmetic, device, or package.

According to the source, an inspection of the store's freezer storage showed that the packages of fish, chicken, and other frozen food items weren't in their labeled place, which caused the shutdown. A six-person EHDP team made the inspection last Sunday.

Since the store get frozen food deliveries at random times of the day, their frozen foodstuffs weren't in their correct places, causing the shutdown, the source said.

New XO Market shut down at approximately 1pm on Sunday, Oct. 4, and reopened on Tuesday, Oct. 6, at 10am. Eight EHDP staff members reevaluated the store and confirmed that the violation has been rectified and they did not find anything dirty.

Saipan Tribune tried to obtain comments from New XO Market but was declined.

CAMACHO

From Page 1

In a statement yesterday, Gov. Ralph DLG Torres and Lt. Gov. Arnold I. Palacios extended their condolences and sympathies to the family and friends of Camacho on behalf of our families and the people of the Commonwealth. "It is a very sad day for all of us as we mourn her untimely passing," the statement adds. In it, Torres said that Camacho was not merely a member of his Cabinet but, most importantly, a member of the Office of the Governor's family.

"Rose's exceptional service and contribution to our Commonwealth over her career, most recently as the administrator of our CNMI Scholarship Office since 2012, will not be forgotten," said Torres, who also praised her "good work and diligent efforts" to make higher education possible for students, and people, on the islands.

Tributes

Separately, in a Facebook post by CNMI Cannabis Commission managing director Monique B. Sablan, who used to work with Camacho, she described her as a "selfless, supportive, caring, loving person," that Camacho always believed in her, and always gave her opportunities to shine. In fact, it was Camacho who named Sablan as the 2018 Employee of the Year at the CNMI Scholarship Office.

Sablan's said the loss of Camacho is "more than losing a boss," and "more than losing a friend," and feels like losing an "older sister, a mentor, and confidant." Sablan added that age "made no difference" and that Camacho was one of the best people she's ever met.

"If I could only explain the many times she's been there for me—you'd understand why this pain hurts so much. Whether it was a 5-minute conversation to hours—she was there for me through it all. She was one person I could always run to. One person who I knew would always care," said Sablan.

Camacho wasn't all work though. Sablan stated that she was a fine mother and wife, that she loved her family "with every ounce of her being" by putting them first and making sure they were always supported, loved, and cared for.

This was echoed by Camacho's son, who paid her tribute on Facebook. "You've mothered me in ways that some have never experienced. …Your love for your children and grandchildren is unmatched and the joy you brought to our family will never be filled now that you've departed," he said.

Sablan said that Camacho was always on the lookout for scholarship opportunities for students in the CNMI.

"She knew what she was doing, and she was good at it. …She was never stingy. I knew I could always turn to her for help," said Sablan.

Torres said that the leadership and work that Pangelinan put in every day helped many people in the community attain their educational goals, improve their economic standing, and see exceptional growth within their lives and in their families.

"We ask the Marianas to keep her family, most especially her husband, Anthony, and their children—Angelo, Sebastian, Spencer, Nana, and Princess—in your thoughts and prayers during this difficult time. We love you, Rose, and we thank you from the bottom of our hearts for being a true public servant for the people of the Commonwealth," said Torres.

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Ex-DOC officer allegedly pawned gun later used in hostage-taking

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Superior Court has imposed a $100,000 cash bail on a former Department of Corrections officer who allegedly pawned his government-issued handgun that was later used in the fatal hostage-taking incident earlier this year

Superior Court Associate Judge Wesley Bogdan imposed a $100,000 cash bail on Eloy Reyes Dela Cruz Jr., a former Corrections officer, because he is accused of pawning the handgun to Gordon Castro for $40 cash and $40 worth of methamphetamine.

Castro later used the handgun in a hostage-taking in March that resulted in the death of Castro and his girlfriend whom he took as a hostage to evade arrest.

After the bail hearing, Dela Cruz was remanded to DOC. Bogdan ordered Dela Cruz to return to court on Oct. 15 at 1:30pm for a preliminary hearing and on Oct. 26 at 9am for an arraignment.

Dela Cruz does not possess a CNMI-firearms ammunition explosive ID card, nor is he registered to sell or transfer, pawn or loan any firearm or ammunition.

According to court documents, Dela Cruz called Michael Jordan Cabrera on Feb. 24, 2020, to ask if he knows anyone interested in buying or trading a chainsaw for methamphetamine or "ice."

Cabrera said he was picked up by Dela Cruz and they went to a poker establishment in Susupe where they met with Castro who refused to trade "ice" for the chainsaw.

Cabrera said Dela Cruz then offered his government-issued black 9mm semiautomatic firearm for $40 and $40 worth of ice. Cabrera said. Dela Cruz then provided his firearm to Castro as collateral.

On Feb. 26, 2020, Dela Cruz reported that his firearm had been stolen from his car.

Women encouraged to explore IT careers

The Latte Training Academy, Inc. is encouraging U.S. eligible women in the CNMI to consider entering into the information technology sector. In partnership with InteliSecure, Inc. the Latte Training Academy introduced the cybersecurity industry into the CNMI marketplace in April this year. The CNMI is the first jurisdiction to boast a full-scale Security Operations Center, commonly referred to as a SOC, in the region. To date, InteliSecure, Inc. has hired just under 10 full-time employees and is seeking to hire additional personnel.

"We are thrilled [with] the success of our partnership with InteliSecure, Inc. who has been aggressive in meeting their hiring plan for the year. Amid a pandemic, they have hired CompTIA-certified professionals trained through the Latte Training Academy, Inc. This has led to a sufficient demand to enroll in our Information Technology Fundamental (ITF+) course, which is a requirement for consideration of employment with InteliSecure, Inc. While we are excited about the demand, we want to strongly encourage women within our community not to shy away for a career within the industry," said LTA president Juan-Carlos Benitez.

With much of the business environment transitioning to online platforms as a result of COVID-19, the Latte Training Academy, Inc. is making headway in attracting other technology companies to the CNMI. The protection of the United States legal system and the CNMI's position on the opposite side of the international dateline provide attractive qualities to tech firms needing to commit to a "follow-the-sun" business model to support their customer base.

"While we are gaining significant interest by tech firms seeking to enter the marketplace, a big component that many firms have been asking about is our workforce diversification. As a result, we began assessing the demographics and recognized that a very small percentage of registered participants and those who make inquiries in the Information Technology program are females. We are not sure why this is the case, but we think it is because the industry is so new to the region and many people believe they must have an Information Technology background and education to apply. Either way, we are encouraging women who may have the slightest interest in entering the Information Technology workforce to register for our upcoming course," said LTA treasurer Ed Arriola, Jr.

The learn more about the program and register, visit www.lattetrainingacademy.org. ***(PR)***

Free support groups for caregivers of persons with dementia continue in Oct.

The online support groups for family caregivers of persons with dementia hosted by the Isa Psychological Services Center at the University of Guam will continue this month. Two sessions will feature Public Guardian Marcelene Santos from the Office of the Public Guardian, who will present on guardianship and other legal aspects of caring for someone with dementia.

The sessions are free of charge to partners, family members, and other caregivers of persons with dementia throughout Micronesia. All support groups are client-centered and confidential.

This month's groups will be held at the following times:

- Oct. 10, Saturday: 10am – noon
- Oct. 21, Wednesday: 6pm – 8pm (featuring Santos)
- Oct. 24, Saturday: 10am – noon (featuring Santos)

Santos will be available after her presentations to answer questions from participants.

The support groups provide a safe place to share the stresses and challenges, successes and rewards of caring for a loved one with dementia with others who may be going through similar experiences. They also provide a forum for caregivers to participate in presentations led by health care professionals and other community members with expertise in caring for persons with dementia.

The sessions are facilitated by clinical psychologist Dr. Iain Twaddle of Isa Psychological Services Center; Isa counselors Samantha Uncangco and Nikolas Gutierrez; and Health Services of the Pacific social worker Rhoda Orallo.

The support groups will be held year-round on the first and third Wednesdays and Saturdays of each month at 6pm on Wednesdays and 10am on Saturdays. The support groups will be conducted remotely on Zoom during the pandemic.

To sign up for a family caregiver online support group, call or email Samantha Uncangco at (671) 735-2883 or isa.tgss@triton.uog.edu or Rhoda Orallo (671) 735-3277 or nfcspmgr@teleguam.net. ***(PR)***

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
Department of Labor
Office of the Secretary
1356 Mednilla Avenue | Capitol Hill | P.O. Box 10007 | Saipan, MP 96950
Phone: (670) 664-3196 | Web: www.marianaslabor.net

NOTICE TO EMPLOYERS

In accordance with Employment Rules and Regulations of the Northern Mariana Islands Administrative Code (NMIAC), the CNMI Department of Labor (CNMI DOL) mandates compliance of the following for all eligible private sector employers. Failure or refusal to comply is cause for CNMI DOL to issue a Notice of Violation to the employer which may result in fines and other sanctions following a due process hearing in the Administrative Hearing Office.

Post Job Vacancy Announcement (JVA) on CNMI DOL website
An employer who intends to employ a foreign national worker, transitional worker, or nonimmigrant alien on a full-time basis (under any new employment arrangement, any renewal of any existing employment arrangement, or any transfer) must post a Job Vacancy Announcement (JVA) on the CNMI DOL website at www.marianaslabor.net. NMIAC § 80-20.1-225(a). No waiver is available for the job vacancy announcement requirement. NMIAC § 80-20.1-225(e).

Submit Total Workforce Listing
Each business employer ***shall report quarterly,*** as of the last day of the calendar quarter, ***the number of employees, job classification, and the hourly wage*** of employees for whom wages were paid during the quarter. NMIAC § 80-20.1-505(b) (emphasis added). The Department requires employers to present this information in a document called "Total Workforce Listing," via email: documents@marianaslabor.net (Excel format).

The Total Workforce Listing is due each quarter:
1st Quarter (January – March)..... due on April 30
2nd Quarter (April – June)..... due on July 31
3rd Quarter (July – September)..... due on October 31
4th Quarter (October - December)..... due on January 31

Attention: The Total Workforce Listing for the 3rd Quarter 2020 is due on or before October 31, 2020. Online submissions may be emailed to documents@marianaslabor.net (in Excel format) or delivered to the DOL Administrative Services Office, Building #1356, Capitol Hill. Online submissions are preferable.

Adhere to Workforce Participation Minimum Percentage requirement
Any employer, unless exempt, who employs workers on a full-time basis must certify that 30% or more of its full-time employees are U.S. citizens, U.S. permanent residents, and/or CNMI permanent residents. 3 CMC § 4525 and NMIAC § 80-20.1-210(c)(3). Failure to maintain a minimum percentage of 30% will result in a Notice of Violation filed against the employer.

Submit new or updated Workforce Plan
All employers who employ nonimmigrant alien workers, unless exempt, must submit a new or updated Workforce Plan every twelve months. NMIAC § 80-20.1-510(c). A workforce plan shall identify specific positions currently occupied by a foreign national worker and timetable for accomplishing the replacement of the foreign national worker with qualified U.S. citizens, CNMI permanent residents, and U.S. permanent residents until the workforce participation objective is met. NMIAC § 80-20.1-510(b). The Workforce Plan form is available on the CNMI DOL website under Forms & Publications at www.marianaslabor.net.

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR ROTA AND TINIAN EMPLOYERS
An employer with multiple job sites in any of the Mariana Islands must submit a separate report for each island. For example, if an organization employs workers for job sites in Saipan and Tinian then the employer must file two separate quarterly compliance reports (one for Saipan and another for Tinian).
- Rota employers must email census employment reports to documents@marianaslabor.net ***and*** dolrota@gmail.com OR delivered to the Rota DOL Field Office at Antonio C. Atalig Memorial Building, Tatachong Village.
- Tinian employers must email census employment reports to documents@marianaslabor.net ***and*** tinianlabordepartment@gmail.com OR delivered to the Tinian DOL Field Office at Edu's Plaza, 1st Floor, San Jose Village.

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR ALL EMPLOYERS WHOSE OPERATIONS WERE AFFECTED BY THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC
An employee currently on furlough, working reduced hours, or laid off as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic must be listed as such on the Total Workforce Listing. See example below.

EMPLOYEE NAME	POSITION STATUS	EMPLOYMENT CITIZENSHIP	COUNTRY OF TYPE/CLASS	VISA HIRED	DATE ENDED	DATE	COMMENT
Australia, Amanda	Chief Financial Officer	FT	Australia	L1-A	11/6/2018		Furlough-COVID 19
China, Chelsea	Operations Agent	FT	China	EAD	12/1/1999		Furlough-COVID 19
England, Edward	Cargo Agent	FT	UK	CW-1	9/2/2017		Reduced Hours-COVID 19
France, Freddy	Cargo Agent	FT	France	CW-1	7/6/2018		Reduced Hours-COVID 19
Guam, Gabby	Flight Attendant	FT	US	US	3/8/2017		
Japan, Jackie	Ticket Agent	FT	Japan	LPR	5/7/2018	4/18/2020	Voluntary Separation
Korea, Ken	Aircraft Mechanic	FT	Korea	CW-1	2/7/2018		
Marianas, Marvin	Chief Executive Officer	FT	US	US	3/24/1976		
Niger, Ned	Airline Pilot	FT	Niger	H-1B	6/10/2018		
Philippines, Phil	Ramp Agent	FT	Philippines	CW-1	8/1/2018		
Qatar, Queenie	Flight Dispatcher	FT	Qatar	CW-1	4/6/2017		
Taiwan, Tommy	Aircraft Mechanic	FT	Taiwan	H-1B	10/7/2005		

TSL Foundation backs programs for women, kids

CONTRIBUTER PHOTO

Tan Siu Lin Foundation executive director Merlie Tolentino, fourth from left, presents the ceremonial check donation to Make-A- Wish Guam and CNMI Chapter, represented by board members Carline Sablan, second from left, Patty Palacios, fifth from left, and Jay Santos, rightmost. Also in the photo during last month's donation turnover ceremony are TSLF Foundation administrative officer Mel Naputi, left, and assistant manager Raymond Zapanta.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Soroptimist NMI president Donna Krum, fifth from left, receives the ceremonial check from the Tan Siu Lin Foundation officials, led by executive director Merlie Tolentino, fourth from left. Also in the photo are Soroptimist NMI officer Marilyn Marron, third from left, TanHoldings Community Relations director Carline Sablan, second from left, and assistant manager Raymond Zapanta, rightmost.

The Tan Siu Lin Foundation's philanthropic work continues, helping organizations move forward with their community projects amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

The TSLF Foundation, the charitable arm of TanHoldings, donated $2,000 to the Make-A-Wish Guam and CNMI Chapter and $1,000 to the Soroptimist International NMI to support their programs that are facing challenges right now due to the pandemic. Make-A-Wish grants wishes of children diagnosed with a life-threatening medical condition, while Soroptimist NMI advocates for women empowerment.

Make-A- Wish Guam and CNMI board member Jay Santos said the Tan Siu Lin Foundation's donation will be used for their program and, although it's unfortunate that the various events they planned for this year are on hold due to the crisis, their group would still want to hear from families with terminally-ill children and work on making their wishes come true.

Santos, who was joined by fellow board members Patty Palacios and Carline Sablan in receiving the donation, added that Make-A- Wish Guam and CNMI deeply appreciates the TSL Foundation's generosity, especially in these challenging times.

"We understand that it's very difficult to raise funds or receive donations nowadays because of the pandemic so we are truly grateful to the Tan Siu Lin Foundation for stepping up," Santos said.

Meanwhile, Soroptimist NMI president Donna Krum said they will be using the TSL Foundation's donation for their annual Live Your Dream gala that will be held this Saturday, Oct. 10, at the Hibiscus Hall of the Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan. Live Your Dream is a program of Soroptimist International that gives cash awards to women who are pursuing their education.

"We would like to thank the Tan Siu Lin Foundation for supporting our program, which is aimed at bettering the lives of women through education," said Krum.

Tan Siu Lin Foundation executive director Merlie Tolentino praised the Soroptimist NMI and Make-A- Wish Guam and CNMI for what they do for the community, particularly for children and women.

"The Tan Siu Lin Foundation rallies behind organizations that provide life-changing experiences to our community members," Tolentino said. ***(PR)***

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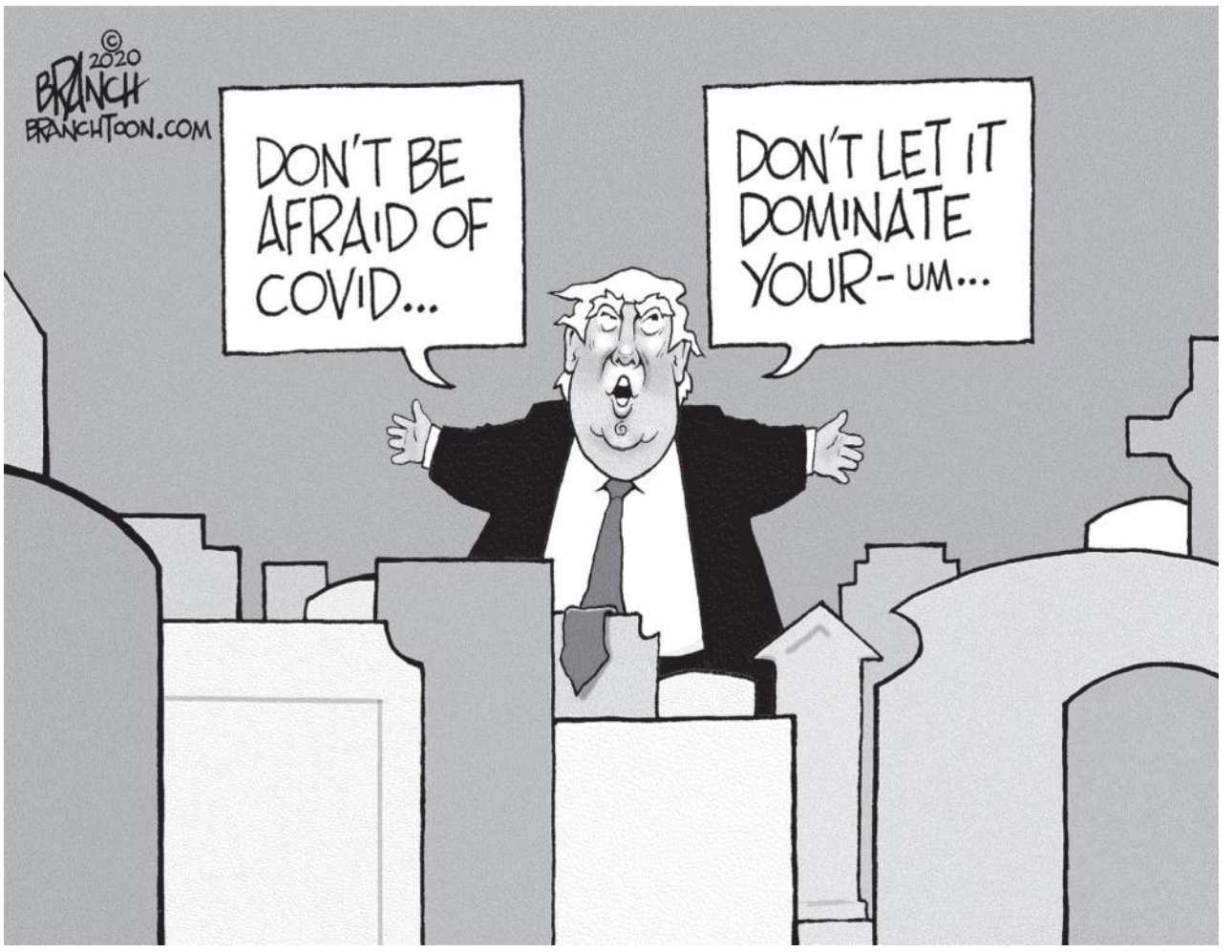

EDITORIAL

Reported surgeries on detained migrant women must be investigated

A nurse at the Irwin County Detention Center in Georgia, which houses migrants detained by Immigration and Customs Enforcement, filed a whistlerblower complaint last month alleging that some female detainees were subjected to unnecessary hysterectomies, in some cases without them fully understanding what was going on.

We won't jump to any conclusions about her complaint. The doctor at the center of the allegations has denied that he did anything contrary to medical ethics or standard medical behavior, and ICE said that only two hysterectomies had been performed on women detained at the center since 2018.

The waters also are muddied a bit by conflicting reports on the number of women who may have fallen victim to unnecessary and unwanted medical procedures, not necessarily limited to hysterectomies. There clearly needs to be thorough investigations by disinterested parties to figure out whether, indeed, a doctor working on behalf of the United States government has sterilized women or performed other possibly unnecessary procedures on them without their full consent.

But the investigations and accountability must not stop there. The federal immigration detention system—mostly an archipelago of privately run prisons or contracted space in local jails—is a humanitarian disaster and an international disgrace. And it is the largest immigration detention system in the world, with some 50,000 men, women and children held at any given time. (Other countries house more refugees, but the U.S. leads in locking up people seeking permission to immigrate.)

There have been reports of children targeted for sexual abuse by staff or other detainees—more than 4,000 such complaints from 2014 to 2018—as well as similar abuses of women. Food preparation has violated basic health standards. A gay man sued over an alleged beating at a detention center in Colorado, and immigrant rights advocates reported that some 30 detainees in a west Texas facility were beaten, pepper-sprayed, refused medical care and subjected to racist taunts.

Then came the COVID-19 pandemic, which has been particularly virulent in prisons and detention centers. Late last month, a federal judge ordered that the population at the 1,940-bed ICE detention center in Adelanto, Calif., be reduced even further after an outbreak there worsened and 81 of the remaining 784 detainees tested positive for the coronavirus.

These are unconscionable practices, yet health and safety problems in detention facilities are not new. A PBS "Frontline" documentary laid out some of them in 2011, and there have been several government reports since then documenting problems within the system.

Late in his second term, President Obama began a process to end Washington's reliance on private contractors to house detained migrants and federal prisoners. The Trump administration not only reversed that initiative, but also has ramped up efforts to incarcerate migrants—many of whom have not been charged with a crime. Oftentimes, the migrants

See REPORTED on Next Page

Climate change is not just getting worse, it's getting harder to predict

By GARY YOHE
The Hartford Courant

Gary Yohe is the Huffington Foundation Professor of Economics and Environmental Studies, Emeritus, at Wesleyan University in Connecticut. He served as convening lead author for multiple chapters and the Synthesis Report for the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change from 1990 through 2014 and was vice chair of the 3rd US National Climate Assessment from 2012 through 2015.

Extreme weather events are now among the most destructive ever experienced. Climate and weather disasters in the United States since 2010 have averaged $80.2 billion in economic damage with 521 lives lost per year. But the reality is, that number is going up. Between 2015 and 2019, annual damages averaged $106.3 billion with 772 lives lost.

None of this is news to people who have been impacted by extreme weather and to scientists like me who have been paying close attention to these troubling trends. For decades, variable climate trajectories have wobbled along their trend lines as atmospheric concentrations of carbon dioxide resulting from human activity have increased since 1955 to produce seven of the hottest 10 years in history since 2010.

We're starting to see these impacts manifest themselves in the weather we're seeing, and the science is now telling us that something new and even more threatening is afoot. It is called "regressing toward the tails"—a very technical but very important new development.

What is it? It is the increasing tendency that extreme events caused by climate change never seem to be as bad as they could have been. While that doesn't sound like cause for alarm, what it really means is that it is ever more likely that the next extreme weather event—be it fire, flood, drought or heat wave—will be even worse than anything that we have previously experienced. So as a result of climate change, the most damaging impacts we've seen so far is becoming the new normal while Mother Nature keeps upping the ante.

Take a look at the worst wildfire year in California's history: 2017. As of Dec. 22, 2017, 9,270 fires had burned 1,548,429 acres, but this year has topped that. As of Oct. 2, more than 7,900 fires had already burned 3.6 million acres with two months left in the fire season. In fact, the largest wildfire in California history has been joined since August by the third, fourth, fifth and sixth largest of all time, and they are still burning.

During the last few weeks, the California wildfires have most frequently been caused by thousands of dry lightning strikes born of monsoon winds from Tropical Storm Fausto off the coast of Mexico. The strikes repeatedly hit drought-ravaged and tinder-dry forests during a near record heat wave. The northern part of the state is experiencing the perfect storm of these five conditions that all lie on the extreme tips of their independent frequency distributions.

Things are not just getting worse. They are also getting harder to control, prevent and predict. Human behavior used to be the usual cause California fires, meaning future threats could be mitigated by taking strong proactive action against future events. But this year, residents can only retreat from the harm as quickly as possible and hope that the climate will change back. But the climate will not change back, and where can they go? As we continue to see, the COVID-19 pandemic is confounding evacuation efforts.

The science community has been studying these weather events closely and has developed a growing understanding of what is really going on, but we are now challenged to communicate that knowledge clearly to the general public and lawmakers.

There are at least four problems in this regard. First, people often mistake weather for climate. Second, they really don't care whether next year will be a warmer or cooler than this year. Third, they find it difficult to internalize signal from noise along long-term trends. And fourth, they are very familiar with pendulums.

What's the problem with pendulums? They give people a false sense of predictability and a misguided sense of stability. People are used to being mesmerized by stationary ones, but the climate is dynamic. The climate pendulums are no longer returning to equilibrium at their lowest points in their arcs. Why? Because their pivot points are moving and accelerating in a dangerous direction (the long-term trends) so that the swinging weights of the pendulums are blowing by their historical limits into some very dark extremes.

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'At this point, what bargaining power does IPI have?'

Editor's Note: The following is the author's statement to the Commonwealth Lottery Commission during its meeting yesterday at the Office of the Governor on Capital Hill.

It's frankly astonishing that we are here today, entertaining IPI's ninth requested amendment since 2015—this company that has no history or culture of compliance.

The licensee has not paid their license fee—after months of assurance to this government, even after COVID-19, up until two months ago when it was due, that they would be able to meet this statutory obligation. Now they are saying, "Give us what we want, and we will pay you half of the license fee in 10 days, and the rest next February."

They want to cut the casino commission's regulatory fee by half. They're already seven days late—and now, apparently, as a result they are in illegal possession of unlicensed gaming machines.

They want to waive the Community Benefit Fund obligation for 2020, and not pay the outstanding $36 million they owe—for three years. And not pay any more into the Community Benefit Fund until after they get the Marpi land and build Phase 1.

Why should IPI be entitled to any more public land?

They want to change the law to weaken the regulatory authority of the casino commission. This, while the Legislature is contemplating a bill to increase the CCC's regulatory power.

They want to change the law to legalize online gaming—and have exclusivity over that too, by the way. How do we get around the federal Wire Act? Who knows? IPI doesn't seem to care. But we should.

I urge you, members of the Lottery Commission, to ask yourselves: What bargaining power does IPI have at this point? Why do they continue to have any power at all over this government? What good faith have they shown? What obligations under the license agreement have they actually met?

They owe taxes. Mr. Finance Secretary, you filed a tax lien for $9 million, for business gross revenue taxes alone, arrears going back to 2017, long before COVID-19. This doesn't even include the millions in developer taxes they owe because they haven't complied with Public Works' repeated requests for an assessment.

They owe Public Lands $250,000 for their current lease. What other business is getting away with that? And IPI wants more public lands.

They owe CUC $200,000 for utilities. Even the hospital got disconnected. Families hard hit by furloughs and unemployment are getting disconnected. Somehow, IPI gets a break.

They owe so many vendors some $39 million. So many small businesses are badly hurting. IPI can't even pay them a few thousand dollars.

They owe hundreds of workers who are waiting for back pay, termination pay, and repatriation tickets so they can go home and move on with their lives. In the meantime, nonprofit groups and good Samaritans in our community are giving these people food and water so they can live.

IPI can't even pay for trash collection and grounds maintenance at employee housing. Living conditions are atrocious.

Their audited financial statements show they are insolvent. As of Dec. 31, 2019—before COVID-19—the auditors expressed substantial doubt about IPI's ability to continue as a going concern.

IPI claims to have a third party willing to finance them for $150 million—if they can only get what they want from the CNMI government. But the company's current liabilities as of December 2019—before COVID-19—exceeded current assets by $280 million. Total deficiency was over half a billion dollars.

IPI is facing so many lawsuits. Who isn't suing or thinking about suing IPI these days? Indictments have been filed against senior IPI executives for money laundering and RICO conspiracy and illegal employment of aliens. And by the way, IPI's own attorney recently told the federal district court that he expects the company to be indicted as well.

Then there is the ever-present specter of FinCEN, and the hammer they may soon bring down on IPI for violations of the Bank Secrecy Act.

Yet somehow IPI thinks they can dangle half of the license fee and half of the regulatory fee and none of the Community Benefit Fund—and still no gaming taxes—and we will just roll over and say, "Okay, here's your extension. Here are more breaks. Here's one more chance."

They truly are playing us like fools. But we let them. Again and again and again.

By TINA SABLAN
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Christina Marie Sablan is a member of the CNMI House of Representatives of the 21st Legislature.

The Casino Commission has multiple pending complaints against this licensee. The casino commission is finally moving to hold a financial suitability hearing to determine whether to suspend or revoke this license.

Members of the Lottery Commission: How are you protecting the public interest if you give IPI what they are demanding? All the concessions and accommodations in the world that you could possibly offer IPI will make no difference at all if they are bankrupt and financially unsuitable.

All you would do is kick the can down the road a little further, and drag out this embarrassing charade a little longer. Consider the cost to our reputation in the world. What legitimate investor would want to come here? What we need at this point is an exit strategy—one that protects the Commonwealth's interests.

Members of the Lottery Commission, let the Casino Commission proceed with their financial suitability hearing. You are under no obligation to entertain IPI's absurd demands. We owe them no favors.

The members of the Lottery Commission are Commerce Secretary Mark Rabauliman (chairman); Finance Secretary David Atalig; and Public Safety Commissioner Robert Guerrero. All were present at yesterday's meeting.

REPORTED

From Page 8

are held just for having the gall to use the congressionally authorized asylum system to seek protection from repression in their own countries.

Some people whom ICE wants to deport should be detained, such as those who pose a threat to public safety and those who the government has an individualized reason to believe are a flight risk. But the government—and the Trump administration in particular—uses detention as a deterrent to potential immigrants, the most notorious example being when it began charging parents caught crossing the border with a misdemeanor as a pretext for jailing them separately from their children, who were forced into foster care or other protective placements. The message: See what happens if you dare come to the border and try to exercise your rights under U.S. and international asylum laws?

The thing is, the vast majority of those being held in detention centers do not need to be there. The government has other, less costly options. It is especially heinous to imprison people who have not been charged with a crime, and who are contesting in civil immigration courts the government's order to leave the country. It is especially atrocious that children are treated this way. But the disgrace moves into even darker waters with allegations of forced sterilizations of women and other unwanted medical procedures.

We'd like to argue that this nation is better than this, is beyond this kind of inhumane behavior. But we can't. As long as Americans know this kind of behavior is going on in their names and do not demand changes, then, well, this is who we are—a society that ignores the unnecessary imprisonment and abuse of women, children and men often guilty of little more than dreaming of becoming Americans.

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Black joy and a handful of mundane moments that have sparked happiness the last 6 months

I could write a very, very long list of all the sucky, heartbreaking, discouraging things that have happened this year, including the recent news of the Breonna Taylor case.

But today, I'm choosing joy. If it's one thing I know about Black people, it's that we have unintentionally mastered the craft of holding both joy and pain at the same time. We've had to, almost as a survival tactic. If you held only the grief or the trauma, you'd just be a sad shell of a person.

But we find the glimmers among the gloom, and joy in the midst of perpetual heartache in order to keep moving forward.

So here's a non-exhaustive list of a handful of mundane moments, people and things that have made me happy the last six months:

1. Finally being grown enough to watch—and understand—"Girlfriends" on Netflix.

2. Group chats with my own girlfriends. There's also four of us, albeit in three different time zones. We named the chat after the TV show's theme song. I'm the Maya of the group, according to a completely unquestionable Buzzfeed quiz.

3. Anything Tabitha Brown does, says, cooks or wears. And that's my business.

4. A little Black girl in Arkansas named Jacie who updates her 187,000-plus Instagram followers on her daily life, and ladens each clip with the thickest Southern "Baybeh," and closes most videos with, "Period. And I mean that!"

5. Surprise tickets to a virtual Usher concert.

6. Eating a personal quiche from a neighborhood bakery and reading magazines on Saturday mornings in a park while my husband shoots hoops nearby.

7. Megan Thee Stallion being a Time magazine influential person of the year. Not only does she deserve it, but did you see that cover? The dress! The leg! The baby hairs!

8. "WAP" by Cardi B and Megan Thee Stallion.

9. Jada Pinkett Smith making "entanglement" a part of the cultural lexicon. And singer August Alsina making a song out of it.

10. Outdoor movies at the local outdoor theater, my favorite being the "Mean Girls" and "Clueless" double-feature.

11. Fall decor and caramel apple scented candles.

12. A Labor Day weekend visit from my mom and sister full of apple and pear picking, volleyball without a net, movie nights and homemade buttermilk biscuits.

13. Quick, socially distanced chats with the Whole Foods heroes who have come to know me by name.

14. My beautician giving me the most pristine two-strand twists that have withstood the test of time.

15. Verzuz battles started by music producers Timbaland and Swizz Beatz.

16. Patti LaBelle's sweet potato pie, my current comfort soul food of choice. Earlier in the pandemic, it was mac and cheese.

17. Eating my Patti pie during the Verzuz battle between her and Gladys Knight. And Patti LaBelle saying something along the lines of, "Don't worry about losing weight; we're in a pandemic." Amen.

18. Watching a grown man giddily play with his new drone in a local park. His joy brought me joy. The woman who was with him wanting absolutely nothing to do with it brought me laughter.

19. Taking up tennis. I am definitely no Serena Williams, but you sure can't tell me I'm not, especially when I slide on my all-white tennis outfit. Look good, feel good, play alright.

I have a tendency to focus on what needs to be better, what isn't quite right, what's missing. It's textbook perfectionism. Because of that, sometimes I don't remember, or even recognize, what actually is sparking happiness.

When critiques abound, I'm gently reminded of the bright spots that are being excluded. This perspective shift helps me center in on the good. And dwelling in that mental space—as opposed to one of anxiety, fear and disappointment—produces more memories of joy.

I hope I was able to help do the same for you.

By CHRISTEN A. JOHNSON
Chicago Tribune

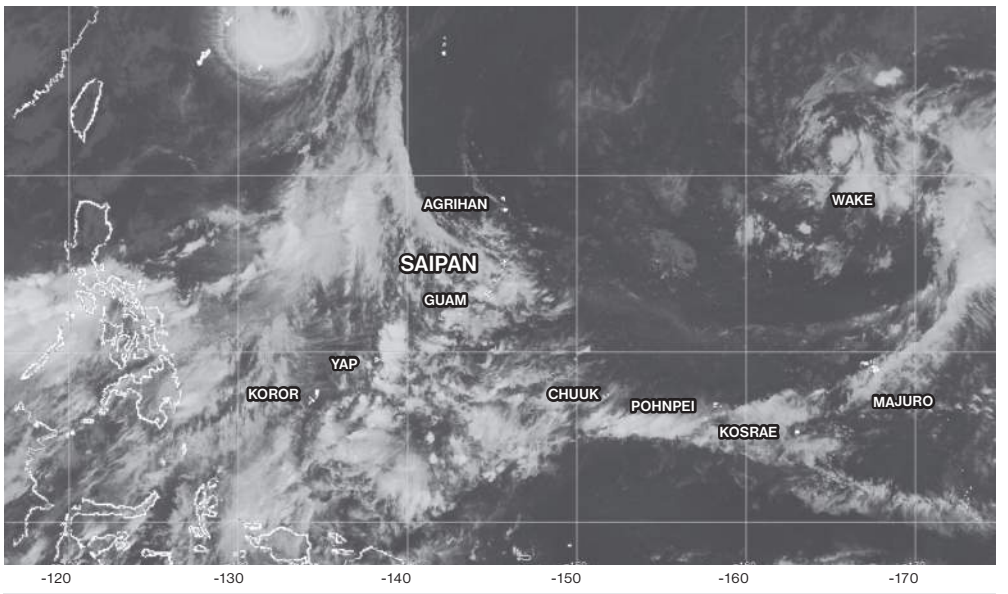
Christen A. Johnson is a features reporter for the Chicago Tribune.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY
Mostly cloudy with isolated showers and thunderstorms. East winds 10 to 15 mph.	Mostly cloudy. Isolated showers and thunderstorms. South winds around 10 mph.	Mostly cloudy. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Mostly cloudy. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms.
87° 77°	87° 76°	87° 77°	87° 77°	87° 77°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 12:16 PM, THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8, 2020

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Showers are not dissipating as expected for this afternoon. A forecast update was needed to make it cloudy with scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms the rest of the day. Also had a gust to 29 knots with the last one, so it could be a good idea to throw in a short AWW wind advisory.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA	▲ ▼ °F	
Guam and Rota	Thunderstorms	86° / 78°
Palau	Thunderstorms	85° / 77°
Yap	Thunderstorms	85° / 79°
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	87° / 80°
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	87° / 77°
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	87° / 77°
Majuro	Thunderstorms	86° / 81°

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:07 AM	6:00 PM
Saturday	6:07 AM	5:59 PM
Sunday	6:08 AM	5:59 PM
Monday	6:08 AM	5:58 PM
Tuesday	6:08 AM	5:57 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	11:55 AM	11:23 PM
Saturday	-	12:48 PM	-
Sunday	2:19 AM	1:41 PM	-
Monday	1:16 AM	2:32 PM	-
Tuesday	2:16 AM	3:21 PM	-

AROUND THE GLOBE	▲ ▼ °F	
Auckland	Showers	66° / 57°
Beijing	Thunderstorms	88° / 81°
Hong Kong	Thunderstorms	90° / 81°
Honolulu	Mostly Sunny	86° / 74°
London	Mostly Cloudy	63° / 54°
Los Angeles	Partly Cloudy	80° / 61°
Manila	Thunderstorms	88° / 79°
Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	66° / 45°
Miami	Thunderstorms	86° / 79°
New York	Showers	77° / 71°
Osaka	Sunny	81° / 66°
Paris	Partly Cloudy	61° / 46°
Busan	Mostly Sunny	77° / 64°
Rome	Partly Cloudy	72° / 52°
Salem	Thunderstorms	85° / 70°
San Francisco	Sunny	79° / 54°
Seoul	Showers	72° / 55°
Tokyo	Partly Cloudy	79° / 66°
Washington, DC	Rain	78° / 72°

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY		FEET
6:12 AM	LOW TIDE	0.10
1:57 PM	HIGH TIDE	1.59
7:20 PM	LOW TIDE	1.26
11:22 PM	HIGH TIDE	1.46

STOP THE SPREAD

The Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. continue to encourage residents within the Marianas to practice social distancing, which means avoiding close contact with people in order to avoid catching the virus yourself and to avoid passing it on to others.

- Stay home as much as possible. Avoid unnecessary travel or public places.
- Avoid social gatherings in groups of more than 10.
- Choose drive-thru, take-out, or delivery options, or outdoor seating, if available, when dining in.
- Send only one healthy adult from the household run necessary errands, such as getting groceries or picking up medications. Leave children, elderly, and other vulnerable people at home as much as possible. When returning home from an errand, wash your hands before doing anything else.
- Older adults and people with chronic medical conditions are at higher risk of getting very sick from this illness. People at high risk should stay at home as much as possible.
- Create a household plan of action, https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/checklisthousehold-ready.html
- Ensure a 30-day supply of all medicines.

Continue good hand hygiene

- Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water, avoid touching your face, cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your sleeve.
- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not readily available.

Know the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and what to do if you become symptomatic

- Stay home when you are sick and if you recently traveled to a place with COVID-19. Self-quarantine means:
- ❏ Choosing a room in your house that can be used to separate sick household members from others.
- ❏ Washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- ❏ Avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- ❏ Limiting visitors

CHCC appreciates the patience and understanding of the community at this time. To obtain general information about the CNMI COVID-19 response, contact the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force Hotline at 287-0046, 287-0489, 287-1089. These numbers are available Monday to Sunday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For medical information about COVID-19, reach out to the COVID-19 Infoline at the following numbers: 285-1672/1352. These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For mental health support and helpful tips during a crisis, call the Mental Health Support Line at 285-1856, 323-6560, 323-6561 These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30 pm. For the 24/7 Disaster Distress Helpline, call SAMSHA at 1-800-985-5990.

For more information about DIY face coverings, visit https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html

For more information about CHCC programs, follow CHCC on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter at @cnmichcc, check out our website at www.chcc.gov.mp or call us at (670) 234-8950.

For more information on the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force, visit www.governor.gov.mpand, follow @GovernorCNMI on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

This health advisory may be found online at http://www.chcc.gov.mp/pressrelease.html and at www.governor.gov.mp/covid-19.

Rumor control

During crises like this, oftentimes the spread of misinformation is just as dangerous as the virus itself. The CNMI is reminded to only share official and verified notices, press releases, and advisories from the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and CHCC.

Source: Office of the Governor

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

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E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF SEPTEMBER 11, 2020

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA117	7:30am	8:10am	1, 4
UA117	7:50am	8:30am	6

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

UA117/183	7:30am	9:10pm	1 via Guam

GUAM-MANILA (MNL)

UA183	7:25pm	9:10pm	1 via Guam
UA183	9:05pm	10:50pm	5 via Guam

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA174	5:50am	6:31am	1, 4
UA174	6:15am	6:56am	6

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA184/174	11:45pm	6:56am+1	5 via Guam

MANILA (MNL)-GUAM

UA184	10:25pm	4:25am+1	1 via Guam
UA184	11:45pm	5:33am+1	5 via Guam

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF OCTOBER 8, 2020

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1301	8:30AM	9:00AM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri
1302	11:00AM	11:30AM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri
1303	3:30PM	4:00PM	Mon/Wed/Fri

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3101	9:30AM	10:00AM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri
3102	12:00AM	12:30AM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri
3103	4:30PM	5:00PM	Mon/Wed/Fri

ROTA TO GUAM

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3401	12:15	12:45	Temporarily Unavailable

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
4301	13:00	13:30	Temporarily Unavailable

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1201	7:00	7:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1202	8:00	8:15	Daily
1203	9:00	9:15	Daily
1204	10:00	10:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1205	11:00	11:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1206	12:00	12:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1207	13:00	13:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1208	14:00	14:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1209	15:00	15:15	Daily
1210	16:00	16:15	Daily
1211	17:00	17:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1212	18:00	18:15	Temporarily Unavailable

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
2101	7:30	7:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2102	8:30	8:45	Daily
2103	9:30	9:45	Daily
2104	10:30	10:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2105	11:30	11:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2106	12:30	12:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2107	13:30	13:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2108	14:30	14:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2109	15:30	15:45	Daily
2110	16:30	16:45	Daily
2111	17:30	17:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2112	18:30	18:45	Temporarily Unavailable

New rules for H-1B visa program

The Departments of Labor and Homeland Security unveiled on Tuesday new restrictions to H-1B work visas as part of the Trump administration's long-sought objective of overhauling a guest worker program it says allows U.S. companies to replace American job-seekers with foreign workers who they can pay lower wages.

Under the Department of Labor rule, employers will need to pay H-1B holders higher wages, a move Trump administration officials said will discourage U.S. companies from turning to cheaper labor from abroad.

The DHS rule will redefine the "specialty occupations" H-1B visa holders can qualify for, requiring petitioners to prove they have a college degree in the specific field they are seeking to work in. The changes will also expand compliance enforcement and mandate that workers hired through a third-party firm be granted one-year work authorizations, instead of the current three-year period.

The Department of Labor interim final rule will take effect Thursday (Friday on Saipan), while the DHS companion rule is expected to be enforced in two months. Collectively, the rules represent the broadest overhaul of the H-1B program in decades, according to experts and government officials.

Ken Cuccinelli, the second-in-command at DHS, said the changes will affect "over one-third" of all H-1B visa petitioners.

"We're making good on President Trump's promise that he made to the American people nearly four years ago, to restore the integrity to the immigration system, to protect Americans from those who seek to exploit our system for personal gain, and to never forget each and every hard-working American struggling to provide for his or her family," Cuccinelli said in a call with reporters. "This rule will help us rebuild our economy and put Americans back to work."

H-1B visas, which are designed for professionals seeking to work in fields deemed to be high-skilled, are popular in the technology sector, including among Silicon Valley companies. At the start of each fiscal year, 85,000 H-1B visas are awarded through a lottery system.

The Trump administration and the groups that support its immigration policies have long criticized guest workers programs, arguing that they are fraught with abuse and hurt U.S. workers. ***(cbsnews.com)***

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
Office of the Governor

Public Assistance Office

DR-4235 | DR-4396 | DR-4404

INVITATION FOR BID
ITB21-PAO-001

Public Assistance Office Tenant Improvement

Governor Ralph DLG. Torres and Lt. Governor Arnold I. Palacios, through the Office of the Governor are soliciting sealed bids for the **Public Assistance Office Tenant Improvement,** 3rd floor MH II Building Marina Heights Business Park, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI).

The project package will be available **October 09, 2020** at the Public Assistance Office located at the 1st floor MH I Building Marina Heights Business Park, Saipan. A $100.00 non-refundable fee for the project package will be assessed. Payment must be made to the CNMI Treasurer and a receipt of payment be present when obtaining a project package. **All interested bidders are required to include an Insurer Certification Clearance (ICC) in their bid packages in order to bid on this project. The ICC should be obtained at the Department of Commerce, Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC) on Capitol Hill.**

Bidding procedures shall be in full compliance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations, currently in effect, and with the Northern Mariana Islands Administrative Code (NMIAC) §70-30-3-725 Gratuities and Kickbacks and §70.30.3-730 Prohibition Against Contingent Fees. All wage rates for employees performing the work, labor and services on this project shall be paid at the current U.S. prevailing wage rates established for the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

There will be a mandatory pre-bid conference and site visit for this project on **October 19, 2020 at 10:00 a.m,. ChST** at the proposed site, 3rd floor MH II Building Marina Heights Business Park Suite 303, Saipan. Questions concerning this project shall be directed to Patrick Guerrero, Public Assistance Officer, in writing on or before **October 20, 2020** to the Public Assistance Office, 1st floor MH I Building Marina Heights Business Park, Saipan, or email to: info@pa.gov.mp. All responses to inquiries will be shared with all prospective bidders.

Sealed bids must be marked *ITB21-PAO-001* for the **Public Assistance Office Tenant Improvement.** For bidders within the CNMI, an original and two copies of sealed bids must be submitted to the Director of Procurement Services located at the former Emergency Management Office, Building No. 1301, Ascencion Drive, Capitol Hill on Saipan no later than **10:00 a.m, ChST October 26, 2020.** Bidders located outside of the CNMI may obtain an additional seven (7) working days for receipt of their bids by submitting **the Notice of Intent Form that is provided in this ITB.** Notices of Intent to Bid must be received by the Director of Procurement Services no later than **10:00 a.m, ChST November 05, 2020.** and must be transmitted via facsimile to (670) 664-1515, or via e-mail to a.magofna@dof.gov.mp. Note that failure to submit this required Notice of Intent document will be cause for a rejection of bid. For bidders located outside the CNMI, an original and two copies of sealed bids must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service or the official government postal service of a foreign country no later **October 26, 2020** and mailed to the Director of Procurement Services at P.O. Box 510008 C.K., Saipan MP, 96950 and the bid documents must be received no later than **November 5, 2020.** Note that failure to submit the required number of copies may be cause for rejection of a bid.

Bids will be publicly open and read at the Procurement Services located at the former Emergency Management Office, Building No. 1301, Ascencion Drive, Capitol Hill on Saipan at ***10:00 a.m. ChST November 6, 2020.*** However, if no notices of intent to bid are received from bidders outside the CNMI, bids will be open at ***9:30 a.m,. ChST October 26, 2020.***

For bids greater than Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars ($25,000.00) a bid security of fifteen percent (15%) of the bid amount must accompany the bid. Bid security shall be on a bid bond, in cash, by certified check, cashier's check or other form acceptable to the government. A surety company shall hold the certificate of authority from the U.S. Secretary of the Treasury as an acceptable surety or other surety acceptable to the Attorney General. Checks must be made payable to the CNMI Treasurer, with the name of the bidder and a notation on the face of the check: "Credit Account No. 44660". If a bid bond is submitted it must be accompanied by an Insurer Clearance Certification (ICC).

The bidder submitting the lowest responsive bid will be subject to a responsibility determination in conformance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations Section 70-30.3-245. The responsible bidder submitting the lowest responsive bid will be awarded a contract with the CNMI Government and will be required to deliver Performance and Payment bonds, each equal to 100% of the contract price for contracts greater than $25,000.00.

Prior to the execution of the contract, the selected contractor shall submit:

a) A current license from the bonding company showing that it has authority to issue bond in the CNMI, and
b) A certification from the bonding company that the unencumbered value of its assets (exclusive of all outstanding commitments on other bond obligations) exceeds the penal amount of each bond.

A contractor submitting an unacceptable payment or performance bond may be permitted a reasonable time, as determined by the P&S Director, to substitute an acceptable bond prior to executing a contract. Acceptable assets are only:

1) Cash
2) US Government Securities
3) Stocks and Bonds traded on US Security Exchange
4) Real Property owned in fee simple in US; and
5) Irrevocable Letters of Credit

Performance time for completion of this project is forty-five **(45) calendar days** upon issuance of Notice to Proceed. The daily amount of liquidated damages shall be two percent (2%) of the contract price divided by one hundred and twenty calendar days, the contract time and will be accessed as delays beyond the established completion date.

All bid documents received shall become the sole property of the CNMI Government. The Government reserves the right to reject any or all bids and to waive any imperfection in a bid proposal that does not affect the elements of price, quantity, and delivery of the bid, in the best interest of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Virginia C. Villagomez
Governor's Authorized Representative

Francisco C. Aguon, Acting Director
CNMI Procurement & Supply

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION
P.O. BOX 500514, Saipan, MP 96950-0514
Email: nmhc@nmhc.gov.mp | Website: http://www.nmhcgov.net

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

The Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC), as auctioneer and seller, hereby gives notice that all the rights, title and interests of NMHC in and to the following described real properties will be sold at auction:

LOT NO.:	006 H 07	Carmen Avenue/Bernardo Street, CK, Saipan	**MINIMUM BID:**	$80,000.00
LOT NO.:	005 I 527	Ahu Dr., Koblerville, Saipan	**MINIMUM BID:**	$60,000.00
LOT NO.:	011 G 608	Chopak Dr., Kagman III, Saipan	**MINIMUM BID:**	$59,000.00

The auction will be open to the general public and will be held at NMHC's conference room, Garapan, Saipan, at 10:00 a.m. on November 10, 2020, subject to the following terms and conditions:

1. Minimum Bid. The minimum acceptable bid for purchase/lease for each property shall be as listed above.
2. Reserve. The auction sale shall be held with reserve.
3. Rights and Duties of NMHC as Auctioneer. Consistent with the custom and usage and applicable law(s) of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands governing auction sales with reserve, NMHC shall have the following rights and duties in conducting the auction sale:
   a. To withdraw any property listed for sale in this announcement before sale or before a bid for such property is accepted.
   b. To adjourn the sale without notice at any time before any specific property is struck off, without incurring any liability whatsoever thereby; and
   c. To reject any and all bids.
4. Bids. Tentative bids may be submitted in advance for any and all of the properties listed in this notice. Such bids shall not be binding, except that the highest of such bids will automatically be considered the opening bid for the item. Bids may be entered in person, in writing, or by telephone to Mr. Jesse S. Palacios, Corporate Director, NMHC, P.O. Box 500514, Saipan, MP 96950; Telephone: 234-6866; Facsimile: 234-9021.
5. Deposit; Payment. A deposit of ten percent (10%) of the purchase price must be paid on the day of the auction sale by cash, cashier's check or credit card (Visa or Mastercard). In lieu of a deposit, NMHC will accept a document from a financial institution stating that the bidder has a pre-approved loan with the amount sufficient to cover the purchase price. The remaining balance or total purchase price amount will be due within thirty (30) calendar days of the auction sale. Failure to make payment of the remaining balance within thirty (30) calendar days will result in forfeiture by the buyer of the ten percent (10%) deposit, and any and all of the buyer's rights, title and interest in any of the aforementioned properties will automatically revert to NMHC. Failure to make payment of the purchase price within thirty (30) calendar days will result in the termination of the buyer's rights, title and interest in any of the aforementioned properties and will revert to NMHC.
   a. Credit card payments totaling $1,000.00 USD, or more, will be charged an additional three percent (3%) fee to recover merchant credit card service fees. This fee does not apply to "debit" card payments.
6. Change of Terms. NMHC reserves the right to change any of the terms of conduct and enforcement of sale by announcement, written or oral, made before the auction sale or at the commencement thereof, and such change or changes, by virtue of this clause, shall be binding on any buyer by constructive notice.
7. Inspection and No Warranty. Bidders are cautioned to inspect the title and property. The interests of NMHC in the property are being sold "AS IS" and without warranty. Failure to inspect the real property or any related documents will not constitute a ground for any claim, adjustment or rescission by any buyer.
8. Lease With Option to Purchase. NMHC shall give notice that it will also consider bids or offers to lease the property, subject to the following terms and conditions:
   a. Maximum acceptable Lease term shall be five (5) years at an interest rate of 6 percent of the amount due (bid price less deposit).
   b. A lease with option to purchase agreement will be executed upon receipt of a deposit of at least ten percent (10%) of the bid or offer price on the day of the auction sale by cash, cashier's check or credit card (Visa or Mastercard) and shall include the following terms:
      i. For move-in ready properties, no alterations or improvements without the prior written consent of NMHC.
      ii. Lessee shall insure property and improvements during the Lease term.
      iii. Lessee shall be responsible for all utilities and other charges associated with the property.
      iv. Lease shall not be assigned or mortgaged without prior written consent of NMHC.
   c. Failure to make full payment of the bid or offer price within the specified time period will result in the forfeiture by the bidder/lessee of the deposit and all payments received and in the eventual termination of the bidder's rights, title and interest including the termination of the lease with option to purchase agreement in any of the aforementioned properties and will revert to NMHC.
   d. Failure to make a deposit within the specified time will result in the termination of any and all of the bidder's rights, title and interest in any of the aforementioned properties and will revert to NMHC.

Dated this 9th day of October, 2020.

/s/ Jesse S. Palacios, Corporate Director
Northern Marianas Housing Corporation

NMPASI
NORTHERN MARIANAS PROTECTION & ADVOCACY SYSTEMS, INC.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

The Northern Marianas Protection and Advocacy Systems, Inc. (NMPASI) is soliciting proposals for Single Audit of financial and compliance audit for fiscal year ending **September 30, 2020**. NMPASI is designated, federally funded protection and advocacy system for persons with disabilities in the CNMI. NMPASI uses a variety of individual and systems advocacy approaches to protect people's rights, including legal and administrative remedies, legislative, policy change and trainings. Proposals for the financial and compliance audit shall be submitted to NMPASI, P.O. Box 503529, Saipan, MP 96950 no later than November 16, 2020. The audit shall be performed in compliance with the following guidelines:

1. Generally Accepted Auditing Standards;
2. OMB Circular A-133; and
3. Compliance with the general Requirements Applicable to Federal Financial Assistance Program.

Award will be based on specific factor such as prior experience, technical competence, ability to meet the deadline and price in this order. The contract for this audit will be awarded no later than **November 30,2020**, and a final audit report shall be completed by **March 15, 2021**. A list of specific audit requirements and Agency's profile are available at NMPASI office, Gualo Rai. Any questions regarding this matter can be addressed to Mr. James Rayphand, Executive Director at (670) 235-7273/4 (voice) or email at jrayphand@nmpasi.org.

Robert Tenorio Torres
Attorney at Law
P.O. Box 503758 CK
Plata Drive, Whispering Palms (Chalan Kiya)
Saipan, MP 96950
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Fax. (670) 234-5749

Attorney for Plaintiff

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT FOR THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

MARIANAS PUBLIC LAND TRUST, **Plaintiff,** **vs.** **DIANA M. QUITUGUA,** **Defendant.**	**Civil Action No. 10-0261** **THIRD AMENDED NOTICE OF AUCTION and JUDICIAL SALE**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, that under and by virtue of a judgment made and entered in the above titled action on the 20th day of September, 2011, by the Superior Court of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, to satisfy the amount found and adjudged due to Plaintiff in the above titled action from Defendant, as prescribed in the Order Approving Judicial Sale of Mortgaged Property. The undersigned counsel or his designee will sell at public auction, to the highest bidder, on the **12th day of November, 2020 at 11:30 a.m.,** at the Marianas Public Land Trust Conference Room, Capitol Hill, Saipan, the premises and real estate, lying and being on Rota, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, described in said judgment, to wit:

Lot 326 R 14, (part of Lot 326 R 13, which was part of Lot 326 R 08, part Lot 316 R 02, part original Lot 316 R 01), containing an area of 929 square meters, more or less, as more particularly described on Drawing/Cadastral Plat No. 326 R 00, the original of which recorded on June 2, 1998 as Document No. 98-1643 at Commonwealth Recorder's Office, Saipan.

Terms and Conditions of Sale.

1. Public Sale: The auction shall be open to the general public

2. With Reserve: The auction sale shall be held with reserve.

3. Rights and duties of Auctioneer. Consistent with the custom and usage and applicable laws of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands governing auction sales with reserve, the auctioneer or his designee shall have the following rights and duties in conducting the auction sale:

a) withdraw the property listed for sale in the public announcement before sale or before a bid for such property is accepted.
b) to adjourn the sale without notice at any time before any specific property is sold, without incurring any liability whatsoever thereby; and
c) to reject any and all bids.

4. Bids. Tentative bids may be submitted in advance for the property listed in the notice. Such bids shall not be binding, except that the highest of such bids will automatically be considered the opening bid for the property. Bids may be entered in person, in writing or by email with full name and complete signature to Robert T. Torres, Attorney at Law, Plata Drive, Chalan Kiya, P.O. Box 503758, Saipan, MP 96950; Email: rttlaw@pticom.com.

5. Deposit and Payment. A deposit of ten percent (10%) of the purchase price must be paid on the day of the auction sale. The remaining balance will be due within ten days of the auction sale. All payments must be made by cash, cashier's check, or money order. Failure to make payment of the remaining balance within ten days will result in forfeiture by the buyer of the 10% deposit, and any and all of the buyer's rights, title and interest in any of the property will revert to Marianas Public Land Trust.

6. Change of Terms. Auctioneer and Marianas Public Land Trust reserve the right to change any of the terms of conduct an enforcement of sale by announcement, written or oral, made before the auction sale or at the commencement thereof, and such change or changes, by virtue of this clause shall be binding on any buyer by constructive notice.

7. Inspection and No Warranty. Bidders are cautioned to inspect the title and property. Bidders are to contact the Law Office of Robert T. Torres for scheduled viewing and inspection times. The interests of the property is being sold "AS IS" and without warranty. Failure to inspect the real property will not constitute a ground for any claim, adjustment or rescission by any buyer.

DATED this 29th day of September, 2020.

/s/
Robert T. Torres, Auctioneer

ROBERT T. TORRES, ESQ. (F0197)
Attorney at Law
P.O. Box 503758 CK
Plata Drive, Whispering Palms (Chalan Kiya)
Saipan, MP 96950
Tel: (670) 234-7859
Fax. (670) 234-5749

Attorney for Plaintiff, Bank of Guam

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT FOR THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

BANK OF GUAM, **Plaintiff,** **vs.** **ABRAHAM E. TAISACAN and LYDIA O. TAISACAN,** **Defendant.**	**Civil Action No. 13-0093** **NOTICE OF AUCTION and JUDICIAL SALE**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, that under and by virtue of the Decree and Judgment for Balance After Property Sale; Writ of Execution Re Judicial Sale; and Order in Aid of Judgment (hereinafter "Decree and Writ of Execution") entered in the above-titled action on March 10, 2020, by the Superior Court of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, to satisfy the balance of remaining due on the judgment to the Bank of Guam from Defendants Abraham E. Taisacan and Lydia O. Taisacan. The undersigned counsel or his designee will sell at public auction, to the highest bidder, on **November 6, 2020 at 10: am, at the Bank of Guam Rota Branch,** Rota Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands premises and real properties, lying and being on Rota, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, described in said Decree and Writ of Execution, to wit:

1. Tract Parcel No. 22055-3, Rota, containing an area of 794 square meters, more or less, as more particularly described on Drawing/Cadastral Plat No. 3022/89, the original of which was recorded 26 May 1989 under File No. 89-1659 at Commonwealth Recorder's, Saipan.
2. Lot No. 002 R 03, Rota, containing an aera of 537 square meters, more or less, as more particularly described on Drawing/Cadastral Plat No. 002 R 00, the original of which was registered 12 November 1971 as Document No. 1289 at Land Registry, Saipan.

Terms and Conditions of Sale:

1. Public Sale: The action shall be open to the general public.
2. With Reserve: The auction sale shall be held with reserve.
3. Rights and Duties of Auctioneer: Consistent with the custom and usage and applicable laws of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands governing auction sales with reserve, the auctioneer or his designee shall have the following rights and duties in conduction the auction sale:
   a. To withdraw the properties listed for sale in the public announcement before sale or bid for such properties are accepted;
   b. To adjourn the sale without notice at any time before any specific property is sold, without incurring any liability whatsoever thereby; and
   c. To reject any and all bids.
4. Bids: Tentative bids may be submitted in advance for all of the properties listed in the notice. Such bids shall not be binding, except that the highest of such bids will automatically be considered the opening bid for the properties. Bids may be entered in person, in writing, to Robert T. Torres, Attorney at Law, Chalan Kiya, P.O. Box 503758, Saipan, MP 96950, Phone: (670) 234-7859; Fax: (670) 234-5749; Email: robert.torres@rttlawgroup.com. Any person who submits his/her bid shall provide a copy of his/her valid Identification Card, or other legally acceptable form of identification. A written bid shall include the bidder's signature, with his/her telephone number, mailing address, and any other contact information.
5. Deposit and Payment: A deposit of ten percent (10%) of the purchase price must be paid on the day of the auction sale. The remaining balance will be due within ten (10) days from the auction sale. All payments must be made by cash, money order, or cashier's check. Failure to make payment of the remaining balance within ten (10) days will result in forfeiture by the buyer of the 10% deposit, and any and all of the buyer's rights, title, and interest in any of the property, which will revert to the Bank of Guam.
6. Change of Terms: Auctioneer and the Bank of Guam reserve the right to change any of the terms of conduct and enforcement of sale by announcement, written or oral, made before the auction sale or at the commencement thereof, and such change or changes, by virtue of this clause shall be binding on any buyer by the constructive notice.
7. Inspection and No Warranty: Bidders are cautioned to inspect the title and property. Contact the Law Office of Robert T. Torres for scheduled viewing and inspection times. The interests of the properties are being sold **"AS IS"** and without warranty. Failure to inspect the real properties will not constitute a ground for any claim, adjustment, or rescission by any buyer. A copy of the appraisal report and other documents pertaining to the mortgaged property to be sold at auction is available upon request. If necessary, a copy of the appraisal report will be provided to the Bank of Guam Manager for Rota, for on-island bidders.

Dated this 28th day of August 2020.

/s/
ROBERT T. TORRES, F0197
Auctioneer

AFTER US DEPARTMENT OF LABOR INVESTIGATION

Guam janitorial company to pay $22.65K for labor law violations

DEDEDO, Guam—After an investigation by the U.S. Department of Labor's Wage and Hour Division, a janitorial and ground maintenance services company and federal contractor in Guam will pay $22,648 to workers for violations of the Fair Labor Standards Act and the McNamara-O'Hara Service Contract Act.

WHD investigators found that JJ Global Services violated FLSA minimum wage and overtime requirements when it failed to pay employees for all the hours that they worked. The employer required grounds maintenance workers to arrive at the firm's shop to attend morning safety meetings and to test their equipment prior to heading to the first job site each day. Workers were also required to return to the shop at the end of the day to clean and store equipment. JJ Global neither recorded nor paid workers for this time.

JJ Global Services violated prevailing wage requirements of the SCA when it failed to pay janitorial and grounds maintenance workers required prevailing wage rates and fringe benefits when they performed work on the employer's contract with the Federal Aviation Administration to care for local facilities.

The employer will pay a civil money penalty of $4,500 for the repeat nature of the FLSA violations, having been found in violation of the same requirements in previous WHD investigations.

"The U.S. Department of Labor is committed to ensuring that workers get paid all the wages they have legally earned, including those earned for any work performed before and after their scheduled shifts," said Wage and Hour district director Terence Trotter, in Honolulu, Hawaii. "The Wage and Hour Division will continue to enforce the law so all employers abide by the same rules, including those doing business with federal government agencies. We encourage other employers to use the results of this investigation as an opportunity to review their own pay practices, and to avoid violations like those found in this case."

The SCA requires contractors and subcontractors performing services on prime contracts in excess of $2,500 to pay service employees in various classes no less than the wage rates and fringe benefits found prevailing in the locality, or the rates, including prospective increases, contained in a predecessor contractor's collective bargaining agreement.

The department offers numerous resources to ensure employers have the tools they need to understand their responsibilities and to comply with federal law, such as online videos or confidential calls to local WHD offices.

For more information about the FLSA, SCA and other laws enforced by the Wage and Hour Division, contact the division's toll-free helpline at 866-4US-WAGE (487-9243). Employers that discover overtime or minimum wage violations may self-report and resolve those violations without litigation through the PAID program. Information is also available at https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd.

WHD's mission is to promote and achieve compliance with labor standards to protect and enhance the welfare of the nation's workforce. WHD enforces federal minimum wage, overtime pay, recordkeeping and child labor requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act. WHD also enforces the paid sick leave and expanded family and medical leave requirements of the Families First Coronavirus Response Act, the Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act, the Employee Polygraph Protection Act, the Family and Medical Leave Act, wage garnishment provisions of the Consumer Credit Protection Act, and a number of employment standards and worker protections as provided in several immigration related statutes. Additionally, WHD administers and enforces the prevailing wage requirements of the Davis-Bacon Act and the Service Contract Act and other statutes applicable to federal contracts for construction and for the provision of goods and services.

The mission of the Department of Labor is to foster, promote and develop the welfare of the wage earners, job seekers and retirees of the United States; improve working conditions; advance opportunities for profitable employment; and assure work-related benefits and rights. ***(PR)***

DoDEA Pacific conducts COVID-19 tabletop exercise

ASAN, Guam—Department of Defense Education Activity Pacific and local military leadership conducted a COVID-19 tabletop exercise at Cmdr. William C. McCool Elementary and Middle School last Oct. 1.

The exercise was designed to put DoDEA staff and military partners through a series of scenarios that could occur when Guam DoDEA schools reopen to classroom learning.

"We discussed the various steps required to safely and quickly respond to possible COVID-19 hazards at DoDEA schools of Guam," said Tiana Guerrero, Joint Region Marianas emergency management planner. "It was important to determine gaps or shortfalls in the plan and take action to remedy them prior to schools reopening. The scenarios we discussed can easily turn into real-world situations and by preparing now, we can better handle unknown variables before they occur."

Participants worked through practice scenarios, discussing roles and responsibilities and documenting questions and concerns, to develop and evaluate plans to respond to potential COVID-19 vectors into DoDEA schools.

"The training went very well," said Lt. Joshua Owens, U.S. Naval Base Guam emergency operations center director. "We were able to take positive steps forward to be prepared for the real-world situations and respond appropriately. We fleshed out any concerns we had and identified areas where we can continue to improve." ***(PR)***

DIVISION OF COASTAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

P. O. Box 501304, Saipan MP 96950 | Gualo Rai Center, Saipan
TEL. NO. 664-8300 | FAX NO. 664-8315
www.dcrm.gov.mp

NOTICE OF APPLICATION

As of October 9, 2020

THE FOLLOWING IS A PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT OF COASTAL PERMIT APPLICATIONS RECEIVED BY THE DCRM OFFICE:

APPLICANT	DATE APPLICATION RECEIVED	APPLICATION PROJECT DESCRIPTION	LOCATION	TYPE	STATUS
1. Office of the Mayor of Tinian	09/10/2020 TSm-2020-X-013	Installation of Bollards	Taga Beach Area, Tinian	Shoreline	Approved* 09/28/2020
2. Office of Representative John Paul Palacios Sablan, 21st House of Representatives of the CNMI	09/23/2020 SSm-2020-X-052, Amendment 2020-1	Two Additional Beach Pala-Pala Structures	Susupe-Chalan Kanoa, Saipan	Shoreline	Approved* 09/25/2020
3. Bridge Investment Group, LLC	09/29/2020 TMS-2020-X-082	Tinian Diamond Casino	San Jose, Tinian	Major Siting	Under Review*
4. Office of Representative Jose I. Itibus, 21st House of Representatives of the CNMI	10/7/2020 SS-2021-001	Construction of Two Beach Pala-Pala Structures	Micro Beach, Saipan	Shoreline	Under Review*

NMIAC §15-10-210 of the CRM Rules and Regulations requires all permit applications to be published in a newspaper for general circulation within the CNMI within 15 days of receipt of application. The list reflects recently received permit applications and those with a recent change in status. New applications are marked with an asterisk (*).

The Public is invited to submit written comments regarding any of the above projects for which a permit decision has not been issued. All permit comments should identify the project by application number. Your comments should be mailed or hand-delivered to the DCRM Office. All persons who desire a public hearing regarding any project may do so by submitting a written request for a public hearing to the DCRM Office within fourteen (14) days for minor permits (APCs) and proposed amended major sitings. Public Hearings are required for all new major siting projects. All public hearing notices are published in a local newspaper of general circulation. Residents of Rota and Tinian may submit comments and hearing requests to their local DCRM Coordinator. Persons wishing to retain the right to appeal a DCRM Permit decision must file a notice of appeal with the DCRM office within thirty (30) days of the issuance of the DCRM permit decision as provided in Part 200 § 15-10-235 of the DCRM Regulations.

Kilili remains hopeful for new relief agreement

Despite President Donald Trump's order to end negotiation over new pandemic relief legislation, Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP) said yesterday he believes there will be an agreement, because the need for aid to individuals, businesses, and states and territories is not going away.

"The House has already passed—twice—legislation with a billion dollars for the Commonwealth and our municipal governments, with more food aid, unemployment assistance, and stimulus payments for families in need, with an extension of the Payroll Protection Program to help businesses and non-profits get through the economic crisis," Sablan said. "Federal Reserve Bank Chairman Jerome Powell said Tuesday that the risks of Congress pouring too much stimulus into the economy are far lower than the risk of not doing enough. Although government spending is adding to an already sky-high federal budget, lawmakers should act. I completely agree with Chairman Powell that, until the pandemic is under control, the situation will just get worse. The President and his allies in the Senate cannot ignore that reality."

Sablan

With the President's decision to walk away from relief negotiations and attention increasingly focused on the Nov. 3 election, the pace of legislative activity has slowed. But Sablan is eager to get back to legislative work when election season is over, he said. Funding for the federal government ends on Dec. 11 and another spending bill will be needed, providing opportunities to help the Marianas. The current, stop-gap continuing resolution included the Marianas in the Pandemic EBT program, which means $12 million to $16 million in new food aid for households with school-age children.

"I also look forward to completing the National Defense Authorization Act, which includes my provisions that will help small businesses, STEM education, and military spouses in the Marianas," he said. Sablan's amendments to the NDAA will expand access to Small Business Administration resources for Marianas business owners, make the Marianas eligible for the Department of Defense's STARBASE education program, implement his Military Spouse Career Education Act, and include the Marianas in the nationwide AMBER Alert program.

His chief concern remains making more services available to veterans in the Marianas. Two bills now waiting the President's signature advance that goal. One, the Vet Center Eligibility Expansion Act, includes a Sablan amendment that requires the VA report on how it will provide Vet Center services in the Marianas. The second, the Whole Veteran Act, Sablan also amended to make sure alternative therapies, such as massage and yoga, offered to other veterans also are available to Marianas veterans.

"The pandemic highlights how very hard it is to be forced off-island for health care services," Sablan said. "We want to save veterans that hardship and get them the resources they need right here in the Marianas."

Sablan said the continuing push for equity with states in Medicaid and other federal programs will be at the top of his agenda in the 117th Congress, which begins in January 2021. Democrats are expected to retain majority control. ***(PR)***

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY

Main Office: FRANCISCO C. ADA/SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
P.O. BOX 501055, SAIPAN MP 96950-1055
Phone: (670) 237-6500/1 • Fax (670) 234-5962
E-mail Address: cpa.admin@pticom.com • Website: www.cnmiports.com

ARCHITECTURAL/ENGINEERING DESIGN SERVICES FOR PORT OF SAIPAN SEAPLANE RAMP MAINTENANCE DREDGING Project No. CPA-SS-001-21

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATION STATEMENTS

The Commonwealth Ports Authority (CPA) is soliciting statements of professional qualifications from interested consultants for Architectural/Engineering Design Services for design services for maintenance dredging of the north and south seaplane ramps and Echo Dock at the Saipan Harbor, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands, Project Number CPA-SS-001-21.

The project is being funded by CPA. This project is in accordance with CPA's Procurement Rules and Regulations and procedures shall be in full compliance with Section 40-50-202 Architect-Engineer Design and Construction Management Services.

The Request for Qualification (RFQ) Package is available upon request to CPA's Executive Assistant/Project Manager, Ms. Wendi Prater, at wprater@cnmiports.com. No fee is required for obtaining the proposal package.

Questions regarding this request for RFQ are to be submitted to Ms. Wendi L. Prater at wprater@cnmiports.com or via hand delivery to the CPA Administration Office, 2nd floor of the arrival terminal, or faxed to (670) 234-5962. Questions should be submitted by no later than 5:00 p.m., Monday, October 26, 2020, Chamorro Standard Time.

Interested Consultants are requested to submit one (1) original, four (4) copies and one (1) electronic version in .pdf of their statements of professional qualifications no later than **5:00 p.m., MONDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 2020.** Statements of qualification must be presented by a combination of both brochures and the use of current U.S. Government Standard Form 330.

The statements of professional qualification will be evaluated based on the criteria available in the RFQ package.

The CPA reserves the right to reject any or all statements of professional qualification for any reason, if in its sole opinion to do so would be in its best interest.

/s/ CHRISTOPHER S. TENORIO
Executive Director

Date: October 7, 2020

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
Office of the Executive Director

INVITATION FOR BIDS
CUC-IFB-20-027

ISLEY WATER TANK FENCE REPLACEMENT PROJECT

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed bids from contractors for the replacement of the existing Isley Water Tank security fence in Isley Field, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Prospective Bidders for this IFB must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The Bid Package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of $100.00 (non-refundable) for one IFB package set.

A Pre-Bid Conference is scheduled on **October 5, 2020 at 10:00 AM (ChST)** at the CUC Main Conference Room, 3rd Floor, Room No.17, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building.

One (1) original and Five (5) hard copies must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked **"CUC-IFB-20-027 *Isley Water Tank Fence Replacement Project"***, to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on October 27, 2020**, at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered. Bid shall be submitted on the provided Bid Forms. Bidders are required to complete all Bid Forms. Bidders may supplement the form as appropriate. Bids will be required to be submitted under a condition of irrevocability for a period of 60 days after submission. Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered.

All bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a bid under the contract.

A *Bid Guarantee* of fifteen (15%) percent of the total bid price must accompany the bids. The bid guarantee may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States, Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. A *Payment Bond* of one hundred (100%) percent and a *Performance Bond* of one hundred (100%) percent of the total bid price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful bidders. The Payment and Performance bond must be executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification shall be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). Bidders are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.

All bidders are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations.

All questions or request for clarification regarding this project must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on October 9, 2020** to Mr. Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Administrator, at email manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Ms. Yvonne Ogumoro, CUC Water/Wastewater Engineer at email yvonne.ogumoro@cucgov.org and Ms. Christie Sablan, Procurement & Supply, Purchasing Technician, Senior at email christie.sablan@cucgov.org

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids and waive any imperfection in the bid proposal in the best interest of the government. All bids shall become the property of CUC.

GARY P. CAMACHO
Executive Director

MANNY BOYER SABLAN
Purchasing Administrator

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
Office of the Executive Director

INVITATION FOR BIDS
CUC-IFB-20-029

TINIAN MAUI WELL II REHABILITATION PROJECT (W17-054)

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed bids from qualified firms for the Tinian Maui Well II Rehabilitation Project in Tinian, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. The project consists, in general installation of a new pump control panel, variable frequency drive (VFD), flow meter, installation of gate valve assembly, pressure gauges, air relief valve, check valves, interior/exterior painting of the facility and other related work. The work shall be done in accordance with the Project Plans and Specifications and without disruption to the daily operation of the water system.

This project is funded by a grant from the United States of Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). The award of this project is contingent upon receipt of the approval for project award from USEPA.

CUC requires the Project to be completed in **240 calendar days** from date of award of contract.

Prospective Bidders for this IFB must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The Bid Package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of $200.00 (non-refundable) for one IFB package set.

A Pre-Bid Conference followed by a Site Visit is scheduled on **September 24, 2020 at 10:00 AM (ChST)** at the CUC Main Conference Room, 3rd Floor, Room No.17, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building.

One (1) original and Five (5) hard copies must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked **"CUC-IFB-20-029, *Tinian Maui Well II Rehabilitation Project"***, to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on October 22, 2020**, at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered. Bid shall be submitted on the provided Bid Forms. Bidders are required to complete all Bid Forms. Bidders may supplement the form as appropriate. Bids will be required to be submitted under a condition of irrevocability for a period of 60 days after submission. **Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered.**

All bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a bid under the contract.

A *Bid Guarantee* of fifteen (15%) percent of the total bid price must accompany the bids. The bid guarantee may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States, Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. A *Payment Bond* of one hundred (100%) percent and a *Performance Bond* of one hundred (100%) percent of the total bid price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful bidders. The Payment and Performance bond must be executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification shall be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). **Bidders are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.**

All bidders are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations.

All questions or request for clarification regarding this project must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on September 30, 2020** to Mr. Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Administrator, via email – manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Mr. Joel Puyat, CUC Water/Wastewater Engineer – via email joel.puyat@cucgov.org and Ms. Marcela Tenorio, Procurement & Supply, Purchasing Technician – via email marcela.tenorio@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids and waive any imperfection in the bid proposal in the best interest of the government. All bids shall become the property of CUC.

GARY P. CAMACHO
Executive Director

MANNY BOYER SABLAN
Purchasing Administrator

Business

Chun Ji: Korean BBQ at its finest

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

There are many Korean barbecue joints on Saipan. And then there's Chun Ji Korean Restaurant Saipan.

First established in 2004, the restaurant atop Safehouse Bar in the tourist district of Garapan has become sort of a go-to place for Korean barbecue on Saipan and the secret lies on how they grill their meats (or, in this case, how customers grill them since it's a Korean barbecue restaurant).

"What makes Chun Ji unique from other Korean barbecue restaurants on island is that we only use the highest premium cuts of meat and ingredients and always use charcoal in each individual grill at every table," said Thomas Kim, whose family owns the restaurant.

For reservations, to order in advance, or for more information, call 285-4200

CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

Chun Ji Korean Restaurant is located on the second floor of the Safehouse Bar along Palm Street in the tourist district of Garapan.

And if you think the use of charcoal in their grilled offerings is the only thing that makes Chun Ji special, Kim said their cooks also make mean versions of classic Chinese dishes.

"We also serve authentic Chinese entrees along with Korean food. Our specialty cut of prime rib sets us apart from other restaurants' cuts of meat," he said.

Bestsellers at the restaurant are grilled beef ribs and seasoned beef ribs, which are prepared Korean barbecue style. Chun Ji's sweet and sour dishes that are available in pork, fish, or shrimp and their special sashimi have gotten high marks as well, according to Kim.

As far as its name goes, Kim said Chun Ji is actually a traditional Korean phrase that means "one world," which pretty much describes the CNMI, with the islands being a melting pot of different nationalities and cultures.

The restaurant known for grilling in charcoal is trying its best to rise from the ashes of the economic crisis brought by the COVID-19 pandemic. "We closed in March due to the pandemic and reopened with safeguards in July," said Kim.

And being at the center of the islands' tourist district, Chun Ji's main market was understandably tourists. With the visitor arrival industry essentially in hibernation, the business had to pivot toward catering to the local market.

"COVID-19 affected our business in highly reducing customers compared to our average. However, we are still grateful for local patronage and appreciate the love during these hard times," he said.

As a big thank you, Chun Ji is currently giving 15% off its entire menu to its valued local customers. "It's our little way of showing appreciation to members of the community. We thank you all for continuously supporting us during these unprecedented times. Our way of giving back is to offer you 15% off on your total bill. We would like to encourage everybody to stay safe and well during these hard times. Thank you to the community for your support," he said.

Chun Ji also strictly follows guidelines and safeguards instituted by the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. since Day 1 of reopening. "We are strictly abiding by the safeguards set by the COVID-19 Task Force at the restaurant as customers are required to check in with their contact information, have their temperatures taken, and sanitize their hands as soon as entering the premises. The restaurant is also equipped accordingly, with the percentage of seats available for dine-in customers, with safe social distancing between each table. We frequently sanitize the entire restaurant, especially areas with frequent contact. Our staff are also kept up to date and educated with updated guidelines," said Kim.

Chun Ji Korean Restaurant also always uses charcoal in each individual grill at every table.

Chun Ji Korean Restaurant only uses the highest premium cuts of meat and ingredients.

Chun Ji Korean Restaurant is located on the second floor of the Safehouse Bar along Palm Street in the tourist district of Garapan. It currently serves only dinner and is open Sunday-Saturday from 5pm to 9pm.

Designated parking space is across the main road on the former poker building next to the QQ Rent-A-Car building. The whole lot can be used for parking, according to Kim.

For reservations, to order in advance, or for more information, call 285-4200, email saipan.chunji@gmail.com, or reach them through their Facebook and Instagram pages.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

PROJECT NO. CPA-RFP-001-21

PROVIDE AND INSTALL BRAND NEW SEAWATER FIREFIGHTING PUMPMOTOR/CONTROLLER SYSTEM

AMENDED

The Commonwealth Ports Authority (CPA) is soliciting sealed proposals (RFP), and other contract provisions, for proposals to provide and install a new seawater firefighting pump/motor assembly at the Port of Saipan. The Executive Director hereby determines that the use of an Invitation for Bid is neither practical nor advantageous to the CPA because the CPA wishes to acquire services and or products that cannot be evaluate by cost alone (NMIAC §40-50-225(a)).

All works shall take place at the Port of Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands.

The proposal package is available for pick-up beginning October 01, 2020, at the Executive Director's Office, Commonwealth Ports Authority, 2nd Floor, Arrival Building, Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport. The proposer shall guarantee that all contents of their proposal be valid for a period of 60 days from the due date of proposals.

A Site Visit is encouraged in order for proposers to familiarize themselves of the type of equipment needed and to ensure that the project surrounding does not inconvenient the project requirement. Proposers are requested to contact Mr. Rodney James Taisacan at telephone numbers 664-3550 or 664-3552 during working hours from Tuesday to Friday (Monday is austerity day).

Questions and/or clarification regarding this RFP shall be directed to: Alex C. Tudela, Procurement Officer by written notice or email at atudela@cpa.gov.mp before 2:00 p.m. November 13, 2020. All responses shall be in the form of written addenda which will be a requirement in the RFP submission.

Proposers are to submit one (1) original and two (2) copies of their proposal to the Office of the Executive Director no later than 4:00 P.M. (CHST) November 27, 2020.

The CPA reserves the right to reject any or all proposals submitted for: (a) any of the reasons set forth in this RFP; (b) any of the reasons set forth in the CPA Procurement Rules and Regulations regarding proposal rejection or cancellation; or (c) sufficient justification exists that awarding the project would not be in the best interest of CPA. CPA further reserves the right to waive any defects of said proposals if in its sole opinion to do so would be in CPA's best interest.

FOR THE COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY

/s/ CHRISTOPHER S. TENORIO
Executive Director

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Job Title: Automotive Service Technician and Mechanic
Hours: Full-Time
Company: Yaong Corporation
Location: Unit 6 Rem Center, Gualo Rai, Saipan, MP 96950

Duties and Responsibilities:
Examine vehicles to determine extent of damage or malfunctions. Repair, reline, replace, and adjust brakes. Perform routine and scheduled maintenance services such as oil changes, lubrication, and tune-ups. Ensure all important parts are examined, including belts, hoses, steering systems, spark plugs, brake and fuel systems, wheel bearings, and other potentially troublesome areas. Repair and service air conditioning, heating, engine cooling, and electrical systems. Disassemble units and inspect parts for wear. Replace parts such as pistons, rods, gears, valves, and bearings. Repair manual and automatic transmissions. Install and repair accessories such as mirrors and windshield wipers. Repair or replace shock absorbers. Replace or adjust headlights. Overhaul or replace carburetors, blowers, generators, distributors, starters, and pumps. Repair radiator leaks. Align vehicles' front ends.

Qualification Requirements:
High school graduate plus six months training as Automotive Service Technician or Mechanic. Two years work related experience required. Knowledge of machines and tools, including their uses, repair, and maintenance. Ability to use acetylene/cutting torches, dial calipers, drill/punch presses, hand-held diagnostic computers, and bleeder/flare nut/pump/slug wrenches. Must be able to diagnose gauges, dials, or other indicators to make sure a machine is working properly. Job requires being honest, ethical, reliable, responsible, and dependable

To apply:
Please send complete and detailed resume to: Yaong Corporation Unit 6 Rem Ctr. Cheribiyan Dr Gualo Rai, Saipan, or mail to P.O. Box 505946, Saipan, MP 96950, or by e-mail to yaong.hr2@gmail.com. Background check may be required prior to employment

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Job Title: Computer User Support Specialist
Hours: Full-Time
Company: Yaong Corporation
Location: Unit 6 Rem Center, Gualo Rai, Saipan, MP 96950

Duties and Responsibilities:
Monitor the daily performance of the company's computer systems. Setup and install computer equipment for employee use, ensuring hardware, software & peripherals are working properly. Assess the employee's work area for needed space for the computer equipment & peripheral as well as ensure necessary resources such as cables, power outlet, surge protection, power backups are installed and functioning properly. Educate and train employees on the proper use of computer hardware and software and peripherals. Answer employee questions regarding computer software or hardware. Troubleshoot computer hardware or software if the answers do not solve the employee's computer problems. Troubleshooting includes conferring with the employee, performing diagnostic testing, consulting technical manuals or websites to resolve the computer hardware or software problem. Perform minor repairs; refer major hardware, peripheral equipment, or software problems to vendor or service center for service. Coordinate with vendor for pick-up / delivery of hardware/equipment and testing that it is working properly upon return from the vendor or from service center. Periodically evaluate if the company's computers, hardware, software, peripherals are working effectively or if they need replacement or upgrade. Modify and/or customize programs for internal needs.

Qualification Requirements:
High school graduate with minimum 4 years work related experience in Computer Support Services. Knowledge of basic principles and practices of office administration, communications, and customer support service etiquette. Knowledge of personal computer hardware and software installation, repair, testing and troubleshooting. Knowledge of Microsoft based products, installation and operation. Skills in installing, maintaining, repairing and problem-diagnosing computer hardware and software applications. Skills in managing own time. Skills in using personal computer hardware and Microsoft programs. Ability to communicate clearly, concisely and accurately with all levels of staff users, both verbally, over the phone and in person, and in writing. Ability to make logical and sound decisions in the resolution of technically challenging situations; translate user needs into technical solutions.

To apply:
Please send complete and detailed resume to: Yaong Corporation Unit 6 Rem Ctr. Cheribiyan Dr Gualo Rai, Saipan, or mail to P.O. Box 505946, Saipan, MP 96950, or by e-mail to yaong.hr2@gmail.com. Background check may be required prior to employment.

Nation

Pence, Harris spar over COVID-19 in vice presidential debate

AP
Vice President Mike Pence speaks as Democratic vice presidential candidate Sen. Kamala Harris, D-Calif., listens during the vice presidential debate Wednesday, Oct. 7, 2020, at Kingsbury Hall on the campus of the University of Utah in Salt Lake City.

SALT LAKE CITY (AP)—Trading barbs through plexiglass shields, Republican Mike Pence and Democrat Kamala Harris turned the only vice presidential debate of 2020 into a dissection of the Trump administration's handling of the coronavirus pandemic, with Harris labeling it "the greatest failure of any presidential administration."

Pence, who leads the president's coronavirus task force, acknowledged that "our nation's gone through a very challenging time this year," yet vigorously defended the administration's overall response to a pandemic that has killed 210,000 Americans.

The meeting, which was far more civil than last week's chaotic faceoff between President Donald Trump and Democrat Joe Biden, unfolded against an outbreak of coronavirus now hitting the highest levels of the U.S. government. Trump spent three days at the hospital before returning to the White House on Monday, and more than a dozen White House and Pentagon officials are also infected, forcing even more into quarantine.

With less than four weeks before Election Day, the debate was one of the final opportunities for Trump and Pence to reset a contest that could be slipping away. They're hoping to move the campaign's focus away from the virus, but the president's infection — and his downplaying of the consequences—are making that challenging.

Trump and Biden are scheduled to debate again on Oct. 15, though the status of that meeting is unclear. The president has said he wants to attend, but Biden says it shouldn't move forward if Trump still has coronavirus.

Republicans desperately want to cast the race as a choice between two candidates fighting to move the country in vastly different directions. Biden and Harris, they say, would pursue a far-left agenda bordering on socialism; the Democrats say Trump's administration will stoke racial and other divides, torpedo health care for people who aren't wealthy and otherwise undercut national strength.

Harris, 55, made history by becoming the first Black woman to stand on a vice presidential debate stage. She condemned the police killings of Breonna Taylor in Kentucky and George Floyd in Minnesota and spoke about the protests against racial injustice in policing that followed, which Trump has portrayed as "riots" as he calls for law-and-order.

"We are never going to condone violence but we must always fight for the values that we hold dear," Harris said. "I'm a former career prosecutor. I know what I'm talking about. Bad cops are bad for good cops."

Pence, 61, said his heart breaks for Taylor's family but he trusts the U.S. justice system. He called it "remarkable" that Harris, as a former attorney general and prosecutor, would question the grand jury's decision in the case not to charge an officer with killing her.

He also pushed back against the existence of systemic racism in police departments and rejected the idea that law enforcement officers have a bias against minorities.

"I want everyone to know who puts on the uniform of law enforcement every day, President Trump and I stand with you," Pence said. "We don't have to choose between supporting law enforcement, proving public safety and supporting our African American neighbors."

The candidates also clashed on taxes—or specifically, Trump's refusal to release his tax returns four years after repeatedly promising to do so. The New York Times reported last month that the president pays very little personal income tax but owes hundreds of millions of dollars in debt.

Police release details of Breonna Taylor investigation

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (AP)—Police files released Wednesday show contacts between Breonna Taylor and a man she dated previously who was suspected of drug dealing, but raise new questions about what led narcotics investigators to the raid of her home that resulted in her death in a burst of police gunfire.

Lt. Dale Massey, a member of the Louisville Metro Police Department SWAT team that arrived on the scene, described the execution of the warrant as an "egregious act." He told investigators he and other SWAT members felt that after seeing what had occurred and through their interactions with another police officer that "something really bad happened."

Massey's comments were included in extensive testimony and other evidence that shed light on the internal Louisville police review of Taylor's death. Protesters in Louisville and elsewhere around the country have demanded accountability for her killing.

The police files contain conflicting information about when the contacts ended between Taylor and her ex-boyfriend, Jamarcus Glover.

In a recorded jailhouse conversation on the day she died, Glover said he and Taylor had not "been around each other in over two months."

"I ain't got nothing going on with Bre no more," he told a woman whose name was redacted from the report.

Other evidence suggests Taylor and Glover were together in the same vehicle a month before her March 13 death.

On Feb. 13, the evidence shows, a pole camera showed Glover driving a car registered to Taylor. He pulled up in front of a residence and went inside. A few minutes later, Taylor got out of the passenger side of the car, looked around for a few seconds and then got back in the vehicle. Glover soon left the home, got back in the car and drove off.

Taylor, a 26-year-old Louisville emergency medical technician studying to become a nurse, was shot multiple times after being roused from sleep by police at her door. The warrant was approved as part of a narcotics investigation. No drugs were found at her home.

The case has fueled nationwide protests against police brutality and systemic racism. When police came through the door using a battering ram, Taylor's boyfriend, Kenneth Walker, fired once.

Taylor family attorney Sam Aguiar said the release of the files was "long overdue."

"We think the public is going to understand even more so why we're so frustrated with how this investigation went down and why there was no criminal accountability," he said by phone.

As for the investigative accounts regarding Taylor and Glover, he said: "You don't see anything in these files that denotes any sort of connection between the two of them for the vast majority of February and March. So it still begs the question, what made them decide ... to go hit this (Taylor's) house."

Busy 2020 hurricane season has Louisiana bracing a 6th time

MORGAN CITY, La. (AP)—For the sixth time in the Atlantic hurricane season, people in Louisiana are once more fleeing the state's barrier islands and sailing boats to safe harbor while emergency officials ramp up command centers and consider ordering evacuations.

The storm being watched Wednesday was Hurricane Delta, the 25th named storm of the Atlantic's unprecedented hurricane season. Forecasts placed most of Louisiana within Delta's path, with the latest National Hurricane Center estimating landfall in the state on Friday.

The center's forecasters warned of winds that could gust well above 100 mph (160 kph) and up to 11 feet (3.4 meters) of ocean water potentially rushing onshore when the storm's center hits land.

"This season has been relentless," Louisiana Gov. John Bel Edwards said, dusting off his now common refrain of 2020 - "Prepare for the worst. Pray for the best."

So far, Louisiana has seen both major strikes and near misses. The southwest area of the state around Lake Charles, which forecasts show is on Delta's current trajectory, is still recovering from an Aug. 27 landfall by Category 4 Hurricane Laura.

Nearly six weeks later, some 5,600 people remain in New Orleans hotels because their homes are too damaged to occupy. Trees, roofs and other debris left in Laura's wake still sit by roadsides in the Lake Charles area waiting for pickup even as forecasters warned that Delta could be a larger than average storm.

New Orleans spent a few days last month bracing for Hurricane Sally before it skirted to the east, making landfall in Alabama on Sept. 16.

Delta is predicted to strengthen back into a Category 3 storm after hitting the Mexican Yucatan Peninsula on Wednesday, then weaken slightly as it approaches Louisiana. The National Hurricane Center forecast anticipated the storm will come ashore in a sparsely populated area between Cameron and Vermilion Bay.

Edwards said President Donald Trump has agreed to sign a federal emergency declaration in advance for the state. The Democratic governor said he doesn't expect widespread mandatory evacuations.

But Edwards said Wednesday that Delta is moving fast, so hurricane force winds could reach well inland, and expected heavy rains could cause flooding.

Plywood, batteries and rope already were flying off the shelves at the Tiger Island hardware store in Morgan City, Louisiana, which would be close to the center of the storm's path.

"The other ones didn't bother me, but this one seems like we're the target," customer Terry Guarisco said as a store employee helped him load his truck with plywood needed to board up his home.

In Sulphur, across the Calcasieu River from Lake Charles, Ben Reynolds was deciding whether to leave or stay. He had to use a generator for power for a week after Hurricane Laura.

Asia

Lawmakers: N. Korean ex-envoy to Italy defected to South

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—A senior North Korea diplomat who vanished in Italy in late 2018 lives in South Korea under government protection, lawmakers said Wednesday.

If confirmed, Jo Song Gil, North Korea's former acting ambassador to Italy, would be the highest-level North Korean official to defect to rival South Korea since the 1997 arrival of Hwang Jang-yop, a senior ruling Workers' Party official who once tutored leader Kim Jong Un's father, late leader Kim Jong Il.

South Korea's spy agency had earlier told lawmakers that Jo left his official residence in Rome with his wife in November 2018 and was under protection at an unspecified location outside the European country.

Lawmaker Ha Tae-keung, a member of the intelligence committee in the National Assembly, wrote on Facebook that Jo arrived in South Korea in July 2019 and is under the protection of the South Korean government.

Ha said he was confirming Jo's arrival on behalf of the committee to prevent a media frenzy, after a South Korean TV station reported about his defection on Tuesday evening. Ha said the committee decided not to provide further details about Jo for his safety.

Jeon Hae-cheol, the committee's chairman, told reporters later Wednesday that Jo came to South Korea voluntarily after expressing wishes to resettle here several times. Jeon said Jo didn't want his arrival to be publicized because of worries about relatives in North Korea, according to Jeon's office.

Neither lawmaker said how they obtained the information. It's likely that they were briefed about Jo by the National Intelligence Service, the country's main spy agency, as committee members routinely meet NIS officers for discussions on North Korea.

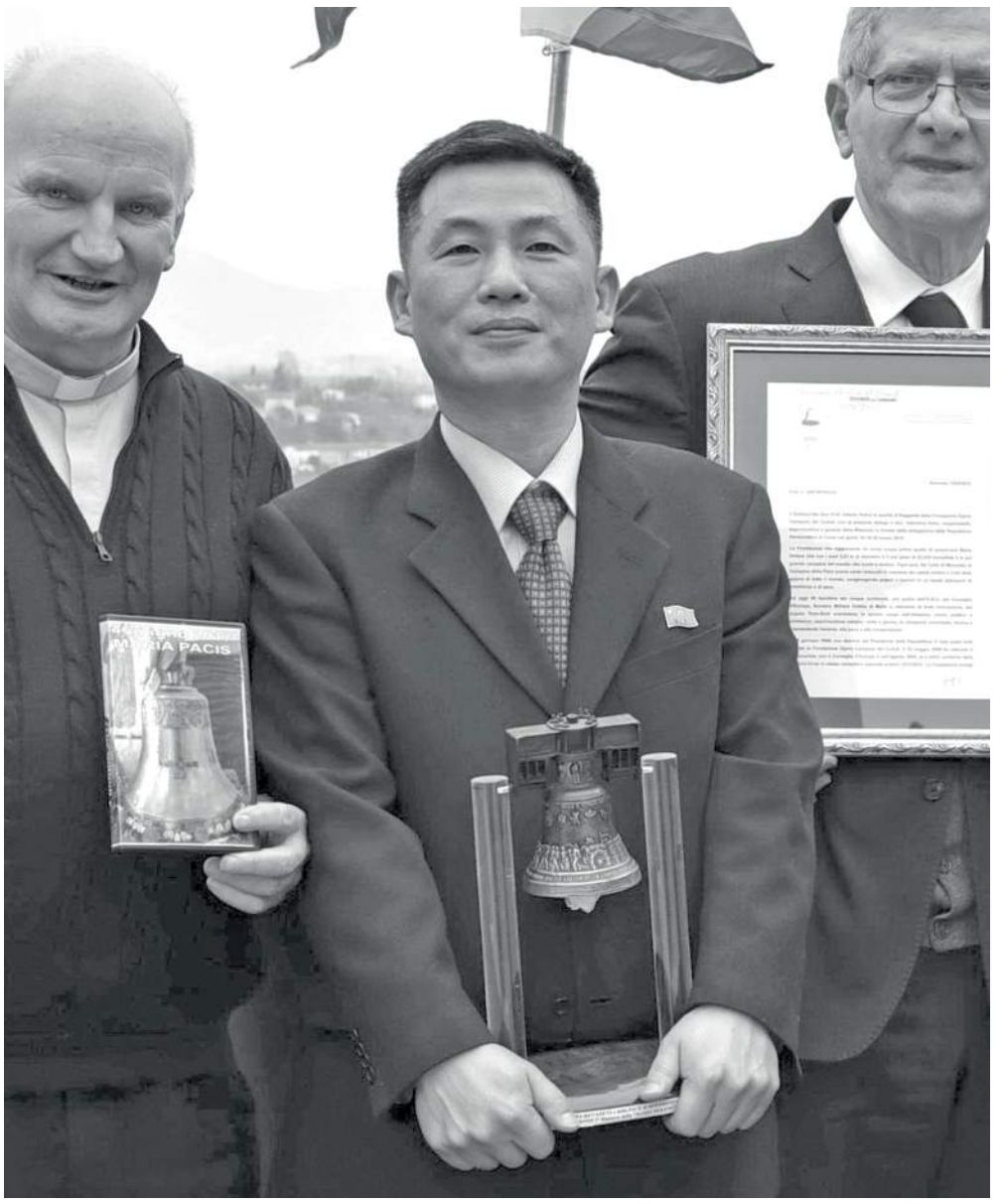
The NIS said it was checking reports about Jo's arrival. South Korea's foreign and unification ministries said they couldn't confirm the reports.

Before Jo, Thae Yong Ho, a former minister at the North Korean Embassy in London, was the most senior North Korean diplomat to defect to South Korea. He came to Seoul in 2016 and was elected to the National Assemby this year. Thae said he decided to defect because he didn't want his children to live "miserable" lives in North Korea and he was disappointed with Kim Jong Un.

Thae issued a statement urging media outlets to refrain from exposing too much about Jo, citing worries about a possible reprisal against his daughter in North Korea.

The reason for Jo's departure from his Rome residence isn't known. North Korea's state media haven't mentioned his possible defection.

About 33,000 North Koreans have fled to South Korea since the late 1990s to avoid political suppression and poverty in the North.



AP

This March 20, 2018, file photo made available on Jan. 3, 2019, by the Parish of Farra di Soligo shows North Korea's acting Ambassador to Italy Jo Song Gil, center, holding a model of "Bell of Peace of Rovereto" during a cultural event on the occasion of a visit of the North Korean delegation to the Veneto region in San Pietro di Feletto, near Treviso, northern Italy.

Sri Lanka bans public gatherings amid sharp rise

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka (AP)—Sri Lankan authorities have banned all public gatherings as a new cluster of COVID-19 expands in the Indian Ocean island nation.

Health authorities said Wednesday the outbreak centered at a garment factory has risen to 1,022 confirmed infections while 1,500 people have been asked to quarantine at their homes.

The health ministry ordered the public not to conduct public gatherings such as exhibitions, parties, conferences, indoor or outdoor events, carnivals, musical shows and processions.

The majority of the infected people are co-workers at a garment factory. The government has also widened a curfew in two suburbs of Colombo where many of the patients live. It earlier closed schools and universities and imposed restrictions on public transport.

The country has reported 4,252 patients with 13 deaths. Of the total patients, 3,274 have recovered.

In other developments from the Asia-Pacific region:

■ India has registered more than 72,000 new coronavirus cases, driving the country's total to 6.75 million. The Health Ministry also reported 986 deaths, taking the toll past 104,500. Nearly 10 states account for 77% of the total active cases in the country. India's recovery rate stands at more than 84%. The government has cited that figure as a reason for further opening the economy by allowing movie theatres to partially reopen next week with 50% capacity. The health ministry also issued guidelines for large gatherings during upcoming religious festivals and barred people from touching idols and holy books at such events to prevent the spread of the virus.

■ New Zealand has again eliminated COVID-19 in the community as life is about to return normal in its largest city, Auckland. From midnight Wednesday, limits on public gatherings and activities will be lifted, though social distancing is advised. The Ministry of Health said the last six active cases associated with a minor outbreak in Auckland have recovered, an announcement that Health Minister Chris Hipkins described as a big milestone. "New Zealanders have once again through their collective actions squashed the virus," Hipkins said. New Zealand went 102 days without a case of community transmission before the Auckland outbreak, which concluded with 186 cases between Aug. 11 and Sept. 25. Three new cases were reported Wednesday in people quarantined after traveling overseas, bringing the number of cases in managed isolation or quarantine facilities to 37.

■ Australia's economic leader says the country's conservative prime minister and its health minister would not liken coronavirus to influenza as U.S. President Donald Trump had done. Treasurer Josh Frydenberg was asked at the National Press Club whether Trump's social media posts that compare COVID-19 to influenza were irresponsible. "Well, you won't see (Prime Minister) Scott Morrison putting out those sort of messages. What Scott Morrison, what (Health Minister) Greg Hunt, what myself and others have always said is that this virus is deadly and it is creating a massive health and economic challenge for us," Frydenberg said. On Tuesday, Frydenberg announced a raft of pandemic relief measures in the budget that would create a record $153 billion deficit in the current fiscal year.

Australia expects COVID-19 vaccination is still a year away

CANBERRA, Australia (AP)—Australia considered a rollout of a coronavirus vaccine no sooner than mid-2021 a best-case scenario in its pandemic planning that would save the economy tens of billions of dollars, the treasurer said on Wednesday.

The Treasury and Health Departments developed economic modelling based on an assumption that a vaccine would be widely available in Australia toward the end of next year, Treasurer Josh Frydenberg said.

"These are very uncertain times and as a government, we have taken every step possible to give Australia the best possible chance of getting a vaccine," Frydenberg told the National Press Club.

Treasury modelling doesn't contemplate a vaccine becoming available in Australia early next year. An early vaccine is regarded as one that is rolled out from July 1, providing certainty to households and businesses while promoting consumption and investment.

This so-called upside scenario also assumes that international students would return to Australian universities late next year due to the vaccine. Hundreds of thousands of students from overseas have made the Australian universities sector one of the nation's biggest earners of foreign currency.

The scenario would boost Australian economic activity by 34 billion Australian dollars ($24 billion) above the current forecast in the June quarter of 2022. Economic growth would be 1.5 percentage points higher in the 2021-22 fiscal year than the 4.75% currently forecast.

Researchers are working on developing more than 170 potential COVID-19 vaccines. A June survey of 28 mostly U.S. and Canadian vaccinology experts published in the Journal of General Internal Medicine found most were pessimistic a vaccine would be available before mid-2021, but thought September or October was achievable.

Frydenberg on Tuesday announced a raft of pandemic measures that would create a record AU$214 billion ($153 billion) deficit in the current fiscal year. Based on the assumption that a vaccine will become available closer to the end of 2021 than July, annual deficits are forecast to shrink in the next fiscal year and beyond.

"We're all hopeful ... that we will find a vaccine, and we have made that assumption based on the end of next year, but obviously as there are developments in the health and the global community, we'll continue to update our position," Frydenberg said on Wednesday.

"There is a great deal of uncertainty in this pandemic," he added.

Australia has allowed for an earlier vaccine rollout with doses manufactured locally under deals struck with two pharmaceutical companies.

If trials prove successful, the University of Oxford/AstraZeneca and the University of Queensland/CSL will provide more than 84.8 million vaccine doses for the Australian population, almost entirely manufactured in Melbourne, with early access to 3.8 million doses of the University of Oxford vaccine in January and February 2021.

World

Up to 150M could join extreme poor, World Bank says

JOHANNESBURG (AP)—Up to 150 million people could slip into extreme poverty, living on less than $1.90 a day, by late next year depending on how badly economies shrink during the COVID-19 pandemic, the World Bank said Wednesday in an outlook grimmer than before.

Middle income-countries are expected to have 82% of the new extreme poor, including India, Nigeria and Indonesia. Many of the new extreme poor will be more educated urban residents, meaning cities will see an increase in the kind of poverty traditionally rooted in rural areas.

Most of the new extreme poor, more than 110 million even by the World Bank's baseline estimate, will be in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa.

The pandemic has abruptly halted years of progress against global extreme poverty, expected to rise this year for the first time in over two decades. It also threatens to worsen global inequality and make it "harder for countries to return to inclusive growth," World Bank president David Malpass said.

Global economic growth is expected to fall by 5.2% this year, more than in the past eight decades.

Almost a quarter of the world's population lives below $3.20 a day, a massive number of people vulnerable to the kind of economic shocks that this year have come in waves. Unemployment is rising, and those who scraped together savings have watched them disappear. Families are eating less. Many children, who account for half of the world's poor, miss out on distance learning.

"Many of the new poor are likely to be engaged in informal services, construction and manufacturing—the sectors in which economic activity is most affected by lockdowns and other mobility restrictions," the report says, citing phone surveys in countries around the world.

Recovery, experts say, could take a decade—a shattering blow to people who had pulled themselves from poverty and saw a better life ahead.

Developing countries are seeking more assistance from the World Bank, other financial institutions and richer governments to free up resources to fight the pandemic. They want an extension of the debt moratorium by Group of 20 nations beyond the end of this year, and they call for outright debt cancellation. They also want the issue of special drawing rights by the International Monetary Fund, but Washington has opposed it.

"If the global response fails the world's poor and vulnerable people now, the losses they have experienced to date may be dwarfed by what lies ahead," the report says. "We must not fail."

The extreme poor are disadvantaged even before birth, the report warns: "Their mothers are less likely to receive adequate nutrition and antenatal care; at birth, their very existence is often not officially registered." Escaping such poverty becomes a huge challenge.

But in Africa, some countries had made "impressive strides" against poverty and several had some of the world's fastest-growing economies before the pandemic. Now Africa's 54 countries say they need $100 billion per year over the next three years to fight COVID-19 and its economic and social effects.

Roughly a third of the newly extreme poor are expected to be in sub-Saharan Africa, between 26 million and 40 million. South Asia, however, will see the largest share, between 49 million and 57 million.

The addition of up to 150 million extremely poor people threatens to rupture governments' already fraying safety nets. The World Bank estimates between 88 million and 115 million people could slip into extreme poverty this year, with another 23 million to 35 million in 2021.

And climate change could drive another 100 million people into poverty by 2030, the report says, with sub-Saharan Africa seeing some of the "most destructive impacts" of global warming.

AP

In this Saturday, March 21, 2020 file photo, people travel by canoe during a coronavirus lockdown in the floating slum of Makoko in Lagos, Nigeria.

Italy imposes mask mandate outside and in as virus rebounds

ROME (AP)—Italy imposed a nationwide outdoor mask mandate Wednesday with fines of up to 1,000 euros ($1,163) for violators, as the European country where COVID-19 first hit hard scrambles to keep rebounding infections from spiraling out of control.

The government passed the decree even though Italy's overall per capita infection rate is among the lowest in Europe. But Premier Giuseppe Conte warned that a steady, nine-week rise in infections nationwide demanded new preventive measures to stave off economically-devastating closures and shutdowns.

"We have to be more rigorous because we want to avoid at all cost more restrictive measures for production and social activities," Conte said.

The decree was passed on the same day that Italy added 3,678 new infections and 31 deaths to its official coronavirus toll, the highest increase in new cases since the peak of the outbreak in April. Both hard-hit Lombardy and southern Campania added more than 500 cases each.

Italy has over 36,000 confirmed COVID-19 deaths, the second-highest number in Europe after Britain.

Even though the World Health Organization doesn't specifically recommend masks outdoors for the general population, the trend has taken off in Italy, particularly as new clusters have been identified in southern regions that largely escaped the first wave of infection.

The new mask mandate was contained in a government decree extending the state of emergency until Jan. 31. It requires residents to have masks on them at all times outdoors, and wear them unless they can guarantee that they can remain completely isolated from anyone other than family. That effectively makes them obligatory outdoors in all urban and semi-urban settings, with exemptions for eating in restaurants and bars.

In addition, masks must now be worn indoors everywhere except private homes, but even at home, Conte urged Italians to keep their distances with relatives, given most new infections are occurring within families.

"The state can't ask citizens to wear masks in their own homes," Conte said. "But we have a strong recommendation for all citizens: Even in our families we have to be careful."

Exceptions include for outdoor sporting activities, children under 6 and for people with health conditions that preclude wearing masks.

Fines ranging from 400 to 1,000 euros ($463 to $1,163) are foreseen for violations, Italian news agency ANSA said.

Italy thus is joining Spain, Turkey, North Macedonia, India and a handful of other Asian countries in imposing a nationwide, outdoor mask mandate. Spain has had such a requirement in place since mid-May and Turkey since last month.

Elsewhere in Europe, such outdoor mandates are in effect in hot spot cities such as Paris, Brussels and Pristina, Kosovo. In many Asian countries, social pressure to wear masks outdoors has made binding government decrees unnecessary. The Australian state of Victoria has had one in place for weeks.

Putin sends a mixed message on US election, hedging his bets

MOSCOW (AP)—Russian President Vladimir Putin on Wednesday decried what he called Joe Biden's "sharp anti-Russian rhetoric" but praised the Democratic presidential nominee's comments on arms control.

In his first detailed statements on the U.S. presidential campaign, Putin also lamented President Donald Trump's failure to improve relations between Moscow and Washington, but blamed this on a "bipartisan consensus on the need to contain Russia, to curb our country's development."

Putin's comments, to Russian state television, seemed intended to serve multiple purposes: playing to Trump's side by casting the Democrats in a pro-Moscow light, while at the same time hedging his bets by flirting with Biden's camp in case he wins.

He said Biden's reference to Trump in last week's debate as "Putin's puppy" was in fact a compliment to Russia and "actually enhances our prestige, because they are talking about our incredible influence and power."

Russia-U.S. relations have sunk to post-Cold War lows over Moscow's annexation of Ukraine's Crimea, the Russian meddling in the 2016 U.S. presidential election and other issues. Last month, Microsoft said that the same Russian military intelligence outfit that hacked the Democrats has attempted similar intrusions into the computer systems of more than 200 organizations, including political parties and consultants.

While Putin again denied meddling in the U.S. election, U.S. intelligence officials believe Russia is using a variety of measures to denigrate Biden and that individuals linked to the Kremlin are boosting Trump's reelection bid.

Biden has been critical of Russia throughout the campaign and dating back to his time as vice president, and the Kremlin leader took note of his "sharp anti-Russian rhetoric," saying it was something "we regrettably have grown accustomed to."

But Putin also praised Biden for declaring an intention to extend the New START arms control treaty that expires in February. The U.S.-Russian talks on extending the pact have produced no visible progress, and Russian diplomats said that chances for making a deal with the Trump administration look slim.

"This is a very serious element of our potential collaboration in the future," Putin said, speaking on his 68th birthday. He added that Russia would be ready to work with any future U.S. president.

Off The Wall

Billions worth of bullions shifted ahead of Dutch bank renovation

THE HAGUE, Netherlands (AP)—This really was the gold standard of road trips.

The Netherlands' central bank transported its Dutch-based stock of gold—14,000 bars and about 1,000 boxes of gold coins—from its headquarters in Amsterdam to a safe in the nearby city of Haarlem in a meticulously and closely guarded operation that ended Saturday, the bank said in a statement.

Along with the bullion worth 10 billion euros ($11.7 billion), the bank also shifted bills worth another 4.5 billion euros ($5.3 billion) in the operation that was led by the Royal Dutch Military Police.

In this Monday, Oct. 12, 2009 file photo, reporters wait outside the De Nederlandsche Bank, the Dutch national bank, in Amsterdam, Netherlands. AP

The cash and gold traveled about 20 kilometers (12.5 miles) in trucks guarded by armed military police, police motorcycle outriders and with a police helicopter hovering overhead. The operation started Friday and ended Saturday afternoon.

Ex-jail workers are charged for playing 'Baby Shark' on repeat

OKLAHOMA CITY (AP)—Two former Oklahoma jail employees and their supervisor face misdemeanor cruelty charges after investigators found they forced inmates to stand handcuffed for hours and listen to the children's song "Baby Shark" on repeat, a prosecutor said Monday.

At least four inmates were secured to a wall with their hands cuffed behind them while the song played on a loop at a loud volume for hours, The Oklahoman reported. The separate incidents occurred in November and December, according to court records.

The misdemeanor charges were filed Monday against former Oklahoma County jail employees Gregory Cornell Butler Jr. and Christian Charles Miles, both 21, and their supervisor, Christopher Raymond Hendershott, 50.

"It was unfortunate that I could not find a felony statute to fit this fact scenario," Oklahoma County District Attorney David Prater said. "I would have preferred filing a felony on this behavior."

Butler and Miles are accused of imposing the discipline and Hendershott is accused of knowing about it but not stopping it, the newspaper reported. Court records do not list an attorney for any of them.

Sheriff P.D. Taylor said Monday that Butler and Miles resigned during an internal investigation and that Hendershott retired.

"We don't tolerate it," Taylor said of the mistreatment. "We always did an excellent job policing ourselves."

The "Baby Shark" song gained huge popularity two years ago after the company Pinkfong released its first video online. The video has since been viewed more than 6.5 billion times.

In VP debate, plexiglass an extra participant

SALT LAKE CITY (AP)—There were three participants in the vice presidential debate: Republican Mike Pence, Democrat Kamala Harris and the plexiglass between them.

The clear partitions went largely unmentioned Wednesday night as Pence and Harris directed criticism at one another, and the home audience couldn't see them in split-screen TV images. But when the cameras showed Pence or Harris from the side, the candidates' reflections were evident on the barriers.

It was a reminder of the coronavirus, prominent in the evening's discussion. They were late additions to the stage in Salt Lake City, underscoring how the pandemic rages on less than a month before the Nov. 3 election. Pence and Harris were stationed at desks spaced more than 12 feet (3.7 meters) apart, each with a partition on the side facing the other candidate.

Sen. Harris' team requested plexiglass be used after President Donald Trump was diagnosed with COVID-19 shortly after his first presidential debate against Democrat Joe Biden last week in Cleveland. Pence's team, meanwhile, insisted they were not medically necessary, an objection that came as Trump returned to the White House. The Trump campaign is trying to move past the virus despite the president's own diagnosis.

For the most part, Pence and Harris directed their comments toward moderator Susan Page rather than in each other's direction. She was not protected by plexiglass.

Other reminders that these are not normal times for a vice presidential debate: 20 chairs for guests were spaced roughly 6 feet (1.8 meters) apart in the debate hall, a performing arts center on the University of Utah campus. The auditorium's balcony included 60 students who won a lottery for tickets and were issued salmon-colored university masks. Donors and other guests sat in traditional theater seats, though there were at least two empty seats between guests.

Staff took guests' temperatures upon entrance into the hall and asked people to sanitize their hands. Wearing a mask was required. Guests were reminded before the event started to keep their masks on and advised that anyone not complying would be asked to put them back on. Frank Fahrenkopf, chairman of the Commission on Presidential Debates, warned that those who refused would be escorted out of the hall by law enforcement.

Science & Technology

Get the most out of Google Map

By EDWARD C. BAIG
USA TODAY

Google Maps turns 15 this year, and many of the 1 billion-plus people who turn to Google's app globally each month do so for more than navigation guidance.

Chances are, you're among them, even if most of your time in Maps is spent figuring out how to get from point A to point B.

Google changed the Google Maps icon in fact to emphasize the evolution of Maps. More than 220 countries have been mapped over the years, and Google says it has surfaced information about more than 200 million places and information.

As part of the birthday milestone, Google has refreshed the look of the iOS and Android versions of its Maps app, most notably through the five tabs that appear on the bottom of the screen; it used to have three.

You can tap the Explore tab for information and ratings and the Commute tab for traffic and travel times and such.

There's now a Saved button where you can review all the places you've been at or may want to go. You can also tap a Contribute tab to share what you know with others and an Updates tab to learn about trending spots from supposed experts.

Here's are 15 other tips from Google on things you can or will be able to do within Google Maps:

1 Translate place names and addresses

Tap the speaker icon that appears next to an address or place name, Google Maps will speak out loud in the local language.

2 Go private

Choosing Incognito Mode and Google won't save your Maps searches. The tradeoff is that you will lose out on some personalization. Separately, you can choose auto-delete controls within your Location History to save three or 18 months of data. Google says it will delete anything older than that automatically.

3 Avoid highways, tolls, ferries

In navigation mode, tap the three dots at the top right corner of the app and look for "Route options" to choose the route types you want to avoid.

4 Share your ETA and live location

Once you've started on your journey, tap the ^ button and then tap "Share trip progress" to do so with designated contacts.

5 Find a bike or scooter

You can find available bikes in real time in two dozen cities or enter a bike-share in the search bar. In more than 80 cities around the world, Google Maps can tell you if a Lime scooter is available, with an estimate on how much your ride will cost.

6 Charge your electric vehicle

In some places, you can also see the location and availability of charging stations for electric vehicles.

7 Know which way to walk

Arrows direct you which way to go when you use Google's Live View augmented reality feature. After choosing a destination, tap the Directions button, and the walking tab.

8 Travel through time

Take a peek at the past. Select a place in Google Maps on the desktop, and drag the yellow "pegman" figure into the picture. Click on the clock that appears in the top left hand corner to choose the frame.

9 Get flight information

Tap the three gray lines at the top left corner of the screen and tap Your Places. Then tap a "Reservations" tab to figure out if your plane is leaving on time. You can also use Maps in the terminal to locate nearby gates, lounges, restaurants and stores.

10 Remember where you parked

Tap the blue dot on the map and then tap "Save your parking." Meantime, before you even drive into an area, look for parking difficulty icons available for more than 50 cities.

11 Save time

Choose the Popular Times and Wait Times features to get a sense of how crowded a restaurant or other place you're headed to is; you might be better or elsewhere.

12 Is my train hotter or colder?

Last year, Google added crowdsourced data to help predict how crowded your bus or train or subway is likely to be at a particular time. Google is now adding new insights via Maps that may impact your commute. These include letting you know whether your train or bus is on the cooler or warmer side, whether certain transit systems have special women's sections or carriages, and whether passengers with special needs can board public transit with staff ready to help.

13 Order food

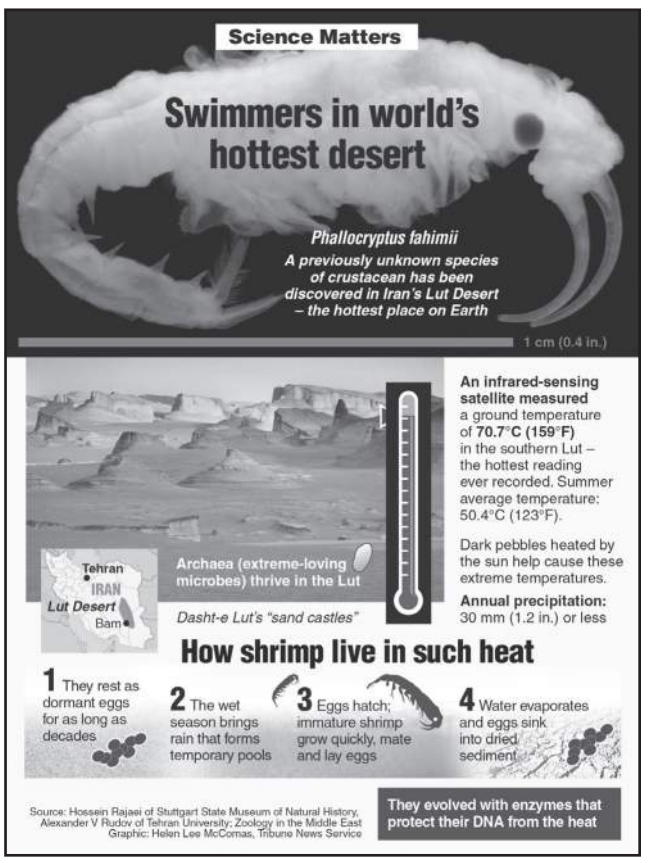
If you tap an "Order Online" button, you can choose pickup or delivery through certain eateries.

14 Add multiple stops

Tap the three dots, then "Route options" and then "Add stop." Google Maps will attempt to provide the fastest route between those stops.

15 Plan group activities

If you long-press anywhere on a map, you can add that place to a shortlist that you can share with friends on any messaging platform.


Science Matters
Swimmers in world's hottest desert
Phallocryptus fahimii
A previously unknown species of crustacean has been discovered in Iran's Lut Desert – the hottest place on Earth
1 cm (0.4 in.)
Tehran
IRAN
Lut Desert
Bam
Archaea (extreme-loving microbes) thrive in the Lut
Dasht-e Lut's "sand castles"
An infrared-sensing satellite measured a ground temperature of 70.7°C (159°F) in the southern Lut – the hottest reading ever recorded. Summer average temperature: 50.4°C (123°F).
Dark pebbles heated by the sun help cause these extreme temperatures.
Annual precipitation: 30 mm (1.2 in.) or less
How shrimp live in such heat
1 They rest as dormant eggs for as long as decades
2 The wet season brings rain that forms temporary pools
3 Eggs hatch; immature shrimp grow quickly, mate and lay eggs
4 Water evaporates and eggs sink into dried sediment
Source: Hossein Rajaei of Stuttgart State Museum of Natural History, Alexander V Rudov of Tehran University; Zoology in the Middle East
Graphic: Helen Lee McComas, Tribune News Service
They evolved with enzymes that protect their DNA from the heat

Life & Style

AP
This image released by Universal Pictures shows a scene from the upcoming "Jurassic World: Fallen Kingdom."

'Jurassic World' shoot suspended after COVID-19 positives

By LINDSEY BAHR
AP FILM WRITER

Filming on the new "Jurassic World" movie at Pinewood Studios in the U.K. has been suspended for two weeks because of COVID-19 cases on set. Director Colin Trevorrow tweeted Wednesday that there were "a few" positive tests for the virus.

He added that the individuals tested negative shortly after, but that they would be pausing for two weeks regardless to adhere to safety protocols.

A spokesperson for Universal Pictures said they were informed of the positive tests last night and that all tested negative this morning.

"The safety and well-being of our entire cast and crew is paramount," the spokesperson added. "Those who initially tested positive are currently self-isolating, as are those who they have come into contact with."

On Tuesday, Universal said that the release of "Jurassic World: Dominion" was being delayed a year to June 2022.

The franchise starring Chris Pratt was one of the first major Hollywood productions to restart after pandemic-related shutdowns. The New York Times in August wrote about the enhanced safety protocols on the set and a few crewmember cases in Britain and in Malta over the summer.

It's the second significant shoot to be affected by COVID-19. Last month the U.K. shoot on " The Batman," a Warner Bros. film, also halted production because of a positive case.

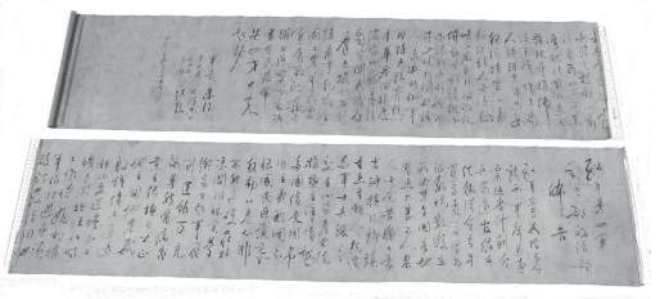
Stolen Mao calligraphy worth millions found cut in half

HONG KONG (AP)—A calligraphy scroll by former Chinese leader Mao Zedong estimated to be worth millions of dollars was cut in half after it was stolen last month in a high-profile burglary in Hong Kong, police said.

The scroll was found damaged when police arrested a 49-year-old man in late September on suspicion of handling stolen property. The South China Morning Post, quoting an unidentified police source, reported that the scroll was cut in two by a buyer who had purchased it for 500 Hong Kong dollars ($65) and had believed the scroll to be counterfeit.

"According to our investigation, someone thought that the calligraphy was too long," Tony Ho, senior superintendent of the police Organized Crime and Triad Bureau, said at a news conference Tuesday. "It was difficult to show it, to display it, and that's why it was cut in half."

Police said the scroll was part of a multimillion-dollar theft by three burglars from collector Fu Chunxiao's apartment in September. Fu, who is well known for his collection of stamps and revolutionary art, was in mainland China at the time of the burglary and has not been in Hong Kong since January because of the coronavirus pandemic.



AP
In this photo provided by Hong Kong Police Force, two pieces of a calligraphy scroll by former Chinese leader Mao Zedong estimated to be worth about $296.7 million are displayed in Hong Kong, Tuesday, Oct. 6, 2020.

The burglars took 24,000 Chinese postage stamps, 10 coins and seven calligraphy scrolls from Fu's apartment, where he stored his collections. Fu estimated that the Mao calligraphy was worth about $300 million and that the theft totaled about $645 million. No independent appraisals of the collections were available.

Texas grand jury indicts Netflix for promotion of 'Cuties' movie

AUSTIN, Texas (AP)—A Texas grand jury has indicted streaming giant Netflix for promoting French film "Mignonnes," or "Cuties," which the court says depicts lewd visuals of children.

The movie received backlash before its release because of a movie poster that went viral for its provocative depiction of its young female actors. The criticism continued after its release in September, including outrage from U.S. Sen. Ted Cruz of Texas and other politicians, who called for subscribers to #CancelNetflix.

The Tyler County grand jury handed down the indictment last month, The Texas Tribune reported. The court filing claims Netflix knowingly promoted work that "depicts the lewd exhibition of the genitals or pubic area of a clothed or partially clothed child."

Netflix did not respond to the newspaper's requests for comment.

But the streaming service has previously apologized for the movie poster and changed the plot summary that described the main character as becoming "fascinated with a twerking dance crew."

The film, which won an award at the Sundance Film Festival, is about an 11-year-old Senegalese immigrant who joins a dance group. The film's writer and director, Maïmouna Doucouré, has said "Cuties" is a critique of the hypersexualization of young girls.

Tyler County District Attorney Lucas Babin, said in a Tuesday press release that the county opted to indict Netflix for promoting the film there. Texas Rangers served a summons to Netflix last week, he added.

Lucas Babin is the son of U.S. Rep. Brian Babin, who has called the film child pornography.

Dad wants nephew's death kept a secret from his kids

DEAR ABBY: My husband's nephew passed away last week. He was only 26, and it was a complete shock. No one realized he was using drugs. My husband is attending the funeral (a nine-hour drive) and will be gone for four days. We have two children, ages 7 and 9, and because of the pandemic, we've decided I will stay home with them.

I'm writing to you because my husband doesn't want to tell our kids that their cousin has died—ever. We don't see his family often—maybe once every few years—but the kids remember their cousin, and I'm sure they will ask about him next time we visit.

I think we need to tell them, but he is adamant they never know. Should I fill them in while he's gone or wait until he's ready to break the news?

FORTHCOMING IN MAINE

DEAR FORTHCOMING: I do not recommend going behind your husband's back with a parenting decision like this one. He may be trying to shield the children from the reality that not only old people but also young people are mortal.

When he returns, approach the kids together, and in an age-appropriate manner, explain to them separately what happened. Many young people experiment with drugs because they think that addiction and death won't happen to them. Knowing what happened to their cousin could ensure it won't happen to either of them.

DEAR ABBY: I have been in a relationship with a guy for a year and a half. We don't live together. During the pandemic, his regular job shut down. He finally got another job and bought lawn equipment to keep in my shed.

His behavior has changed, Abby. I haven't heard from him in weeks. He says men don't call women anymore, and if I want to talk to him, I should call him. How do you know if you are in a relationship if there's no communication? Plus, he gets irritated when I bring it up.

NOT RIGHT IN THE EAST

DEAR NOT RIGHT: When someone's behavior suddenly changes, there is usually a reason. What that reason may be, I can't guess and neither can you. The dynamic in your relationship with this person is definitely different.

Call him and ask him if his feelings for you have changed. It may be that he is depressed. It may also be he now has a job and is busy. That he becomes irritated when you have tried to raise the subject tells me he is defensive. And that's a red flag.

DEAR ABBY: Is it OK for 70-year-olds to get engaged? Both of us are widowed after long marriages. My wife died two years ago. Her husband passed more than three years ago. I am 77, and she is 75. We are both active and feel lucky to have found love again. We have been a couple for seven months now. I could find nothing about it on the internet.

Also, how long should we be engaged? Could we announce an engagement without setting a wedding date? Should I give her an engagement ring? I am not experienced. My last engagement was in 1961. That marriage lasted 56 years.

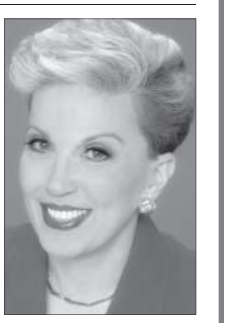
IN THE DARK IN NEW MEXICO

DEAR IN THE DARK: I assume you and this lady are already discussing marriage. While you are doing that, ask her if she would like a ring and whether she would like to join you in selecting one or would prefer to be "surprised." You can announce an engagement without mentioning a wedding date, but because you have been a couple for only seven months, consider formalizing your union on the anniversary of your first meeting.

For an excellent guide to becoming a better conversationalist and a more sociable person, order "How to Be Popular." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Popularity Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

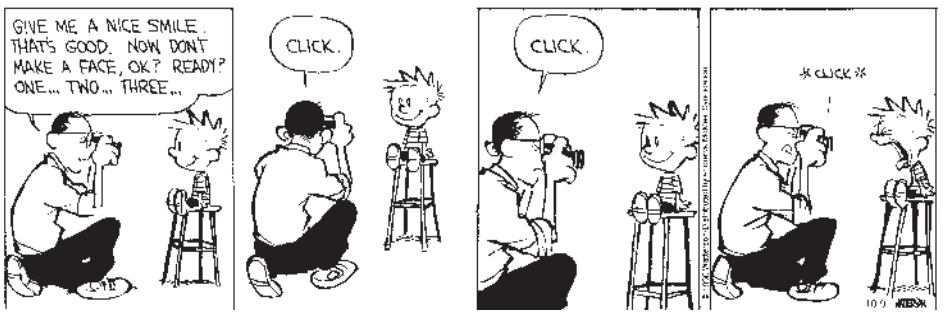


Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

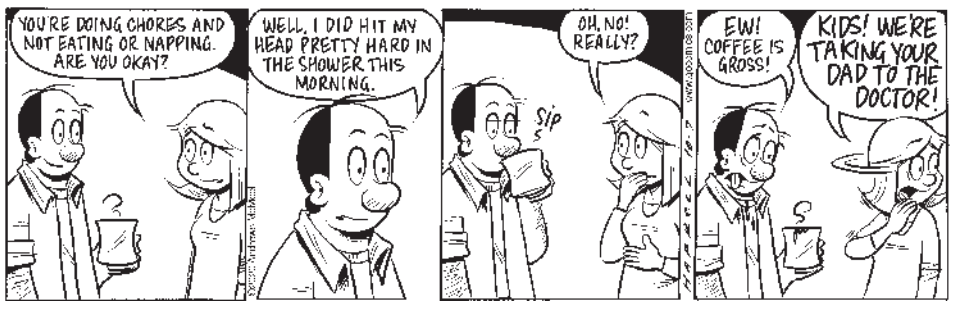


Garfield®

By Jim Davis

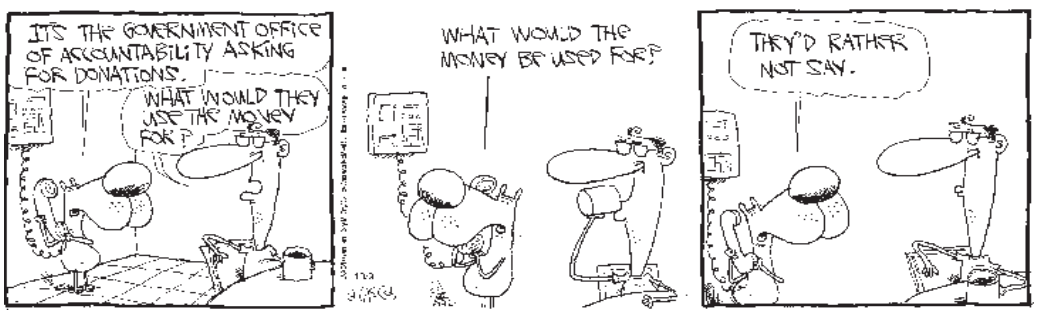
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


YOU'RE DOING CHORES AND NOT EATING OR NAPPING. ARE YOU OKAY?
WELL, I DID HIT MY HEAD PRETTY HARD IN THE SHOWER THIS MORNING.
OH, NO! REALLY?
SIP
EW! COFFEE IS GROSS!
KIDS! WE'RE TAKING YOUR DAD TO THE DOCTOR!

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy


IT'S THE GOVERNMENT OFFICE OF ACCOUNTABILITY ASKING FOR DONATIONS.
WHAT WOULD THEY USE THE MONEY FOR?
WHAT WOULD THE MONEY BE USED FOR?
THEY'D RATHER NOT SAY.

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

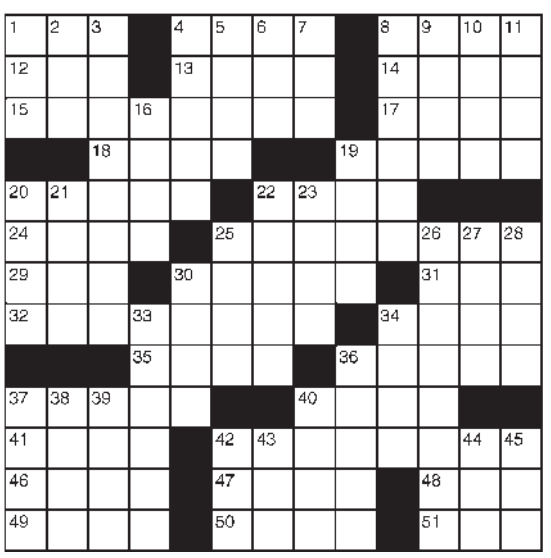
ACROSS
1 Rug cleaner, briefly
4 Crazy
8 Pouchlike parts
12 Spanish gold
13 "Hi, sailor!"
14 Baseball's Moises
15 Don Quixote's "foe"
17 Blunder
18 Pisa farewell
19 Stinging insects
20 Dance moves
22 Estate recipient
24 Messes up
25 Hatmaker
29 Illuminated
30 Bowl of greens
31 Paris summer
32 Grinding kitchen utensil
34 Wall St. deals
35 Scepters
36 — Rushmore
37 James Bond portrayer Daniel
40 Hoopster Malone
41 Speech problem
42 Oodles and oodles
46 Take — (try the wine)
47 Sulk
48 Mil. morale booster
49 Contradict
50 Totals
51 Kenny G's instrument

DOWN
1 Pledge
2 Onassis nickname
3 Piece for soloist and orchestra
4 Tibetan monks
5 Toledo's state
6 Gen.'s underling
7 Popeye's Olive
8 Jungle trek
9 Shakespeare title starter
10 Brilliant stroke
11 Long lunches?
16 Quick swims
19 Untamed
20 Narcissist's love
21 Half a sextet
22 Rolling landscape
23 Airline to Tel Aviv
25 Hotel worker
26 Vague
27 Thames town
28 Take it easy
30 Urban haze
33 Like a melting Popsicle
34 Actress Singer
36 Fountain drinks
37 Not naked
38 Ascend
39 B — boy
40 Heidi of "Project Runway"
42 AWOL pursuers
43 Debtor's letters
44 Code-breaking gp.
45 Boston team, for short

Solution time: 25 mins.

L	A	W	S	■	■	D	U	D	■	B	R	A	T
I	R	A	Q	■	■	O	N	E	■	A	E	Π	O
M	E	N	U	■	■	N	A	G	■	S	L	A	Γ
N	A	G	A	N	O	■	R	■	S	E	■	■	■
■	■	■	W	O	R	K	E	D	C	V	E	R	■
R	A	N	K	S	■	■	N	E	O	■	A	L	A
E	V	A	S	■	■	D	O	S	■	K	N	I	I
Ɔ	■	M	■	A	I	H	■	⅃	I	■	A	S	■
C	V	E	R	W	O	Π	K	Ǝ	D	■	■	■	■
■	■	T	I	Ǝ	R	■	R	A	D	■	S	H	■
T	O	A	D	■	■	A	L	I	■	E	S	A	I
E	D	G	E	■	■	M	Ǝ	_	■	R	E	G	S
I	E	S	S	■	■	A	O	_	■	S	E	A	S

Yesterday's answer 10-9



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call 1-900-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Brandon Routh, 41; Scott Bakula, 66; Tony Shalhoub, 67; Sharon Osbourne, 68.

Happy Birthday: Tell it like it is. Don't mince words or sidestep around issues you need to address. Clearing the air is the way to new beginnings. Let your creative imagination take over, and be innovative as you move into unfamiliar territory. Live up to your expectations, and push for what you want. Keep your life simple and focused, and stay in control. Your numbers are 4, 18, 22, 25, 34, 42, 48.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* Think before taking on something or someone who isn't your responsibility. Frustration and anger will weigh you down. Pour your energy into nurturing positive relationships and concentrating on projects that will help you grow personally and professionally. ✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* You don't have to stand alone. Discuss your objective with a friend, relative or lover, and you will come up with a workable plan that will bring about positive changes and a healthy, happy life. Love is featured, and romance is encouraged. ✪✪✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Assess your life, your immediate prospects and what you intend to accomplish. It's essential to have a plan in place before you make a move. Don't risk your health, your emotional well-being or a chance to improve your status quo. ✪✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* Say what's on your mind, but do so with compassion, understanding and reasonable alternatives. Getting along will buy you time to put what you want in place and encourage you to make decisions that are beneficial to you and others. ✪✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Let your actions speak for you. Anger will stand between you and what you want to achieve. Channel your energy into getting things done, taking care of responsibilities and following through with your plans. Make home and work efficiency priorities. ✪✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* Call in favors, show appreciation, discuss and make changes that will encourage better relationships with a friend, relative or lover. Physical improvements will fetch compliments, build confidence and give you the push you need to romance someone you love. ✪✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Play to win, don't back down, be direct and head in the direction that will bring the highest return. Put an end to taking a back seat to others. Concentrate on getting ahead, not wasting your time following someone's pursuits. ✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Slow down and do things right the first time. A conversation will touch on sensitive issues but reveal valuable information that can help you make a significant lifestyle change. Romance is on the rise and will enhance your life. ✪✪✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* A friend or relative will disappoint you. Don't lend or borrow money or possessions. Get active and stay fit. Time spent on self-improvement will pay off. A favor granted will help you resolve a debt. Don't exaggerate or expect too much from others. ✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* A disagreement with someone who has a difference of opinion will lead to emotional stress. Keep the peace with a friend or relative. Offer the same conditions you would like in return, and go about your business. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* A problem will fester if you aren't open about how you feel. You may not like the change that follows, but it will be beneficial in the end. Keep your money and possessions separate. Avoid joint ventures. ✪✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Send a message and follow through. Make the changes that will allow you the freedom to do as you please. An emotional plea will help you adjust to a lifestyle that is affordable and satisfying. Romance is featured. ✪✪✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are loyal, convincing and smart. You are willful and sincere.

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SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

	6	2	7	8	1		
	1					5	
4							7
2			1		4		3
1							9
5			3		6		8
9							5
	2					8	
		5	9	3	7	2	

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 10/09

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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

6	4	8	9	5	3	7	1	2
9	1	5	6	7	2	4	3	8
3	2	7	4	8	1	9	5	6
8	9	6	7	1	4	5	2	3
7	5	4	2	3	8	1	6	9
2	3	1	5	6	9	8	4	7
4	8	3	1	2	7	6	9	5
1	6	2	8	9	5	3	7	4
5	7	9	3	4	6	2	8	1

Difficulty Level ★★★

WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the **WONDERWORD.**

IT'S GIGANTIC! **Solution: 8 letters**

E	S	H	P	L	A	N	E	T	O	R	N	A	D	O
R	T	O	D	P	O	B	O	N	A	C	L	O	V	D
R	A	L	L	I	P	M	E	M	O	R	I	A	L	R
O	L	E	S	H	M	U	F	E	E	R	L	U	A	A
R	F	N	E	S	N	A	Z	S	H	L	T	E	J	Z
I	A	A	E	E	R	T	R	Z	E	I	B	V	O	I
M	V	E	M	C	N	E	Y	Y	L	T	V	O	E	L
Y	E	U	R	A	R	I	S	R	P	E	I	E	L	L
O	C	T	O	Ⓟ	U	S	K	U	E	K	S	K	I	A
Y	L	A	T	S	Ⓞ	I	P	P	O	W	C	N	M	F
X	I	T	S	D	T	Ⓞ	R	I	M	H	E	U	S	R
A	F	S	R	C	M	E	Ⓛ	E	D	U	E	R	R	E
L	F	U	H	A	W	O	R	M	P	E	P	R	B	T
A	O	E	L	O	E	T	F	A	R	C	R	I	A	A
G	N	L	T	N	A	H	P	E	L	E	L	A	H	W

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Dodgers near NL Championship Series

ARLINGTON, Texas (AP)—Cody Bellinger would take the homer-robbing catch over the home run he hit if he had to pick from the two. The Los Angeles Dodgers needed both from their MVP center fielder.

Bellinger nearly went to a knee to hit his long home run, and later made a spectacular, leaping catch at the center-field wall to take away a go-ahead shot from Fernando Tatis Jr. as the Dodgers barely held off the San Diego Padres, 6-5, Wednesday night.

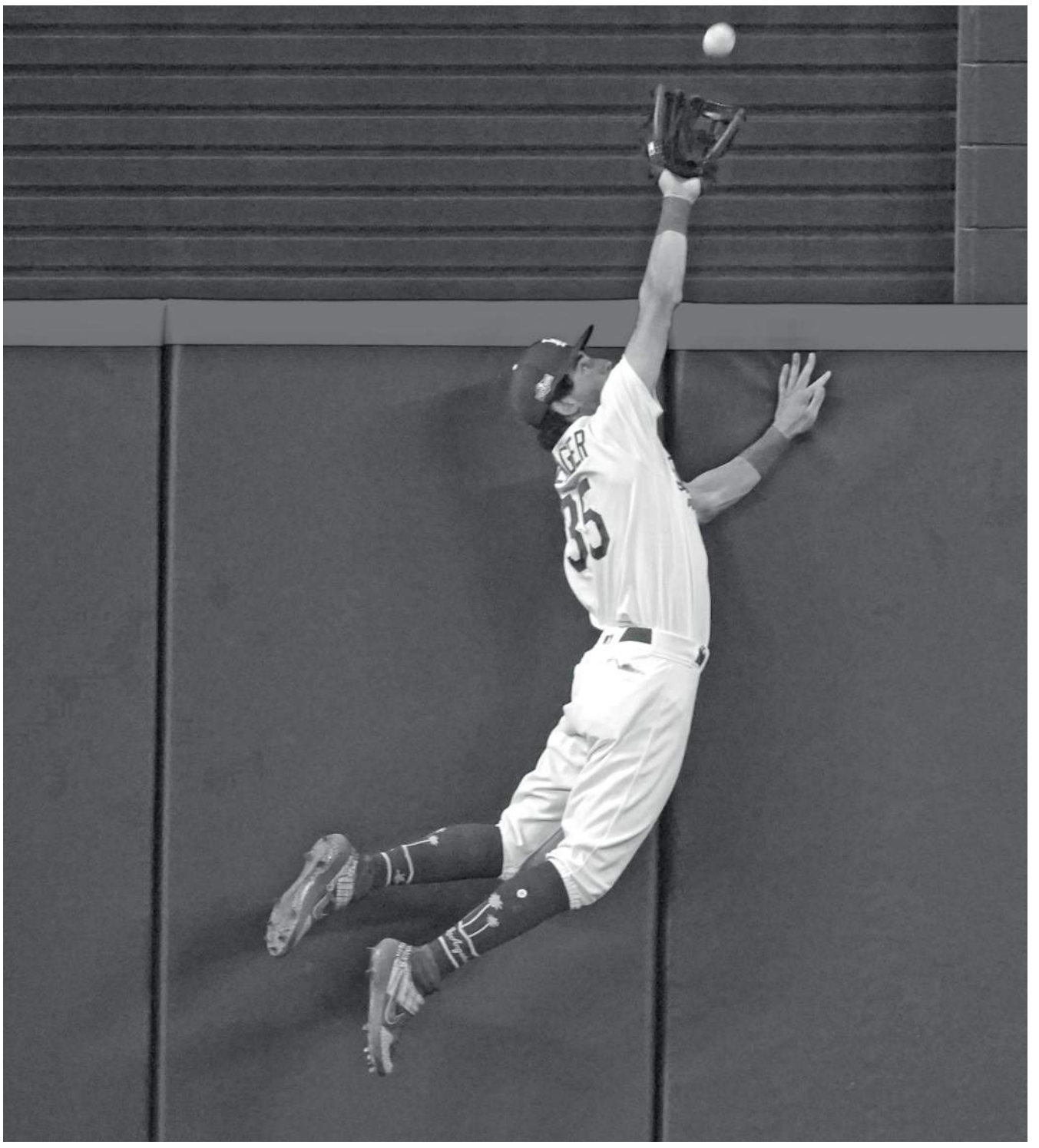
Los Angeles took a 2-0 lead in the NL Division Series when Joe Kelly finally got the last out with the bases loaded in a tension-filled ninth inning.

"It's going to take a while to wind down from that one," said Bellinger, the 2019 NL MVP. "That's postseason baseball right there."

Kelly retired Eric Hosmer on a routine grounder to earn the save after Dodgers All-Star closer Kenley Jansen wobbled in the ninth. Los Angeles can sweep the best-of-five set from its NL West rival Thursday night.

The Padres were down one with a runner on and two outs in the seventh when Tatis, the 21-year-old budding superstar, hit a towering drive to center. Bellinger ran nearly 100 feet while watching the ball, then jumped and extended his gloved right hand above the 8-foot wall to make the grab.

"I just kind of turned around as fast as I could, got to the fence and saw that it was probable, so I decided to try to time up the jump, and it's how it worked out," Bellinger said. "I didn't know if it was a homer or not, but I knew I caught it."



AP
Los Angeles Dodgers' Cody Bellinger slams into the outfield wall and makes the catch as he robs San Diego Padres' Fernando Tatis Jr. of a home run on a deep drive during the seventh inning in Game 2 of a National League Division Series Wednesday, Oct. 7, 2020, in Arlington, Texas.

Brusdar Graterol, the second Dodgers reliever after starter Clayton Kershaw, slung his glove and cap away and thrust both arms into the air to celebrate what Bellinger said was only the second homer he has robbed in his career— the first in the playoffs.

"Certainly turned out being the difference in the game," Padres rookie manager Jayce Tingler said. "Tatis squared it up pretty good. For him to go up and rob one there, there's not much to say."

Game 3 is Thursday night, and the Dodgers can advance to the NL Championship Series for the fourth time in five seasons. They went to the World Series in 2017 and 2018 before losing in a five-game Division Series to the Washington Nationals last October.

Rays 8, Yankees 4

Randy Arozarena homered for the third straight game and Kevin Kiermaier and Michael Perez also went deep for the Tampa Bay Rays, who beat the New York Yankees to move within one victory of reaching the AL Championship Series for the first time in 12 years.

New York slugger Giancarlo Stanton hit a two-run shot in the eighth inning to become the first player with a homer in each of his team's first five games of a single postseason. Stanton has six homers and 13 RBI in those five games.

The Rays took a 2-1 lead in the best-of-five Division Series. Game 4 is Thursday night at Petco Park, which has yielded 16 home runs in three games—nine by Tampa Bay.

Athletics 9, Astros 7

Chad Pinder tied the score with a three-run homer in the seventh inning, Sean Murphy hit a go-ahead sacrifice fly in the eighth and Oakland rallied past Houston to avoid elimination in their AL Division Series.

Houston leads the best-of-five set 2-1 and can advance to its fourth straight AL Championship Series with a victory in Game 4 on Thursday.

The Astros wasted leads of 2-1 and 7-4, and the Athletics bounced back after giving up advantages of 1-0 and 4-2.

Braves 2, Marlins 0

Rookie right-hander Ian Anderson pitched like a poised veteran, right fielder Nick Markakis made a nifty defensive play late and Atlanta threw another playoff shutout in beating Miami for a 2-0 lead in their NL Division Series.

The Braves have tossed three shutouts in four games this postseason. Travis d'Arnaud and Dansby Swanson both homered for the second straight day, putting Atlanta one win from a sweep in the best-of-five matchup.

The 22-year-old Anderson, who made his major league debut in late August, scattered three hits and struck out eight over 5 2/3 innings.

Seahawks, Packers off to high-scoring starts

SEATTLE (AP)—Russell Wilson and Aaron Rodgers have their offenses clicking at an impressive rate.

Wilson's Seattle Seahawks and Rodgers' Green Bay Packers have scored at least 30 points in every game so far this season, a feat that bodes well based on history.

Since 1990, only nine teams before this season had scored at least 30 points in each of their first four games. Seven of those nine teams made it to the Super Bowl, but only Washington won it all in the 1991 season. The other two made the playoffs.

The Rams in 2018, Broncos in 2013 and Patriots in 2011 are the last three teams to do it and they all ended the season as runners-up.

The scoring has been up significantly throughout the league with eight teams averaging at least 30 points, the most ever through four weeks.

Overall, the 51.3 combined points per game so far this season are the highest through four weeks in the Super Bowl era, topping the 48.1 from the 2018 season. Only the 1962 AFL (52.1 ppg) and the 1961 AFL (52.0) had higher scoring starts to a season.

Meanwhile, Tom Brady is completing more deep balls than ever, even at age 43. Brady is taking well to coach Bruce Arians' offense in Tampa Bay that stresses the deep ball much more than it was in New England.

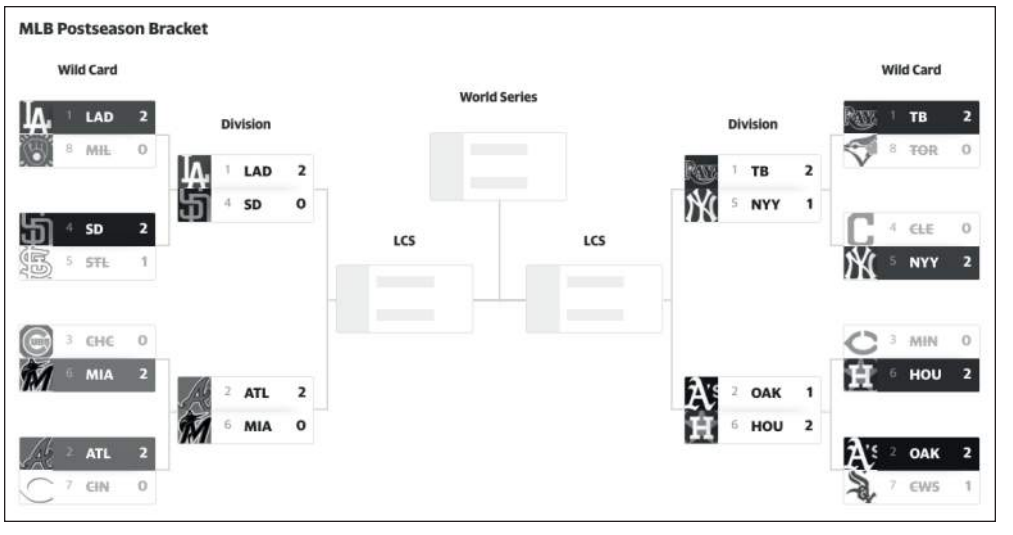
Brady is tied for the league lead with 12 completions on passes that traveled at least 20 yards downfield, according to SportRadar. His previous high through four games since air yards began being tracked in 2006 were the 10 he had in 2011 and '17.

But Brady might not have the most impressive transformation when it comes to deep balls. Thanks in part to the addition of Stefon Diggs in Buffalo, Josh Allen has completed 11 of his 16 deep throws (68.8%) so far this season, with Diggs grabbing four of them.

Allen had only 10 deep completions combined in the past two seasons, converting on just 22.7% of them.

Six teams that missed the playoffs in 2019 already have won three games this season, including the Pittsburgh Steelers, who are 3-0. The other teams are all 3-1: Chicago, Cleveland, Indianapolis, the Rams and Tampa Bay.

Since 1990, at least four teams each season have made the playoffs after missing out the previous year.



Lakers to wear 'Black Mamba' jerseys in Game 5

FLORIDA—During their march through the NBA playoffs, the Los Angeles Lakers have spoken at length about the meaning of Kobe Bryant in their pursuit of a title.

Now, they'll be trying to finish that run with his memory on their backs.

The Lakers plan to don their "Black Mamba" jerseys for a Game 5 of the NBA Finals on Friday, the team announced. The Lakers currently hold a 3-1 lead over the Miami Heat in the series, one win away from their first NBA championship since Bryant's final title in 2010.

The Lakers initially planned to wear the uniforms in Game 2 and Game 7 of the NBA Finals, but decided to wear them for Game 5 as well.

The "Black Mamba'" jerseys were designed by Bryant himself and introduced during the 2018 season. As they approached this year's playoffs, the Lakers made the popular decision to bring back the uniforms.

The Lakers are now 4-0 while wearing the uniforms, with wins over all four of their playoff opponents. The most iconic of the wins came against the Denver Nuggets in the Western Conference finals, when Anthony Davis made a buzzer-beating 3-pointer and yelled Bryant's name.

Following a Game 2 win in the NBA Finals, LeBron James was asked about the jerseys and had this to say: "It's always special to represent someone that meant so much, not only to the game but also to the Lakers organization for 20-plus years. For us to honor him, being on the floor, this is what it's all about. We're thinking about the Bryant family, of Vanessa and them daughters. They're with us, we're with you guys, we love you guys and hopefully, we're making them proud by wearing these uniforms tonight and throughout the course of the postseason."

The Lakers have worn their gold jerseys in Games 1 and 4 and white in Game 3.

AP

Los Angeles Lakers forward Anthony Davis (3) takes a shot in front of Miami Heat players during the second half of Game 2 of the NBA Finals, Friday, Oct. 2, 2020, in Lake Buena Vista, Fla.

LeBron going for the finish

Los Angeles Lakers forward LeBron James got back to his hotel suite after Game 4 of the NBA Finals early Wednesday morning. At 6:30 a.m., he was already tweeting out images to announce to his 47.6 million followers that he was wide-awake.

When the season's over, he'll sleep plenty.

Until then, his cycle is going to be a total mess.

Like it or not, the NBA Finals are on hiatus until Friday—the first two-day break in this series between the Lakers and Miami Heat.

"For me, I mean, at this point in the season, I don't care about rest," James said. "I really don't. I don't care about sleep. I don't care about resting throughout the game. ... I don't care about resting because I can rest in a week, max."

Maybe sooner. James' teams—two in Miami, one in Cleveland—are 3-0 in finals games when they stand a win away from a championship. All-time, his teams are 38-10 in games where they have closeout chances.

Clearly, James doesn't like to wait when the chance comes to clinch a series.

"They are going to make adjustments. We got to be prepared for it," Lakers forward Anthony Davis said of the Heat, who are facing an elimination game for the first time in these playoffs. "We're going to make adjustments. It's going to be a big two days for us. Come out Game 5 and hopefully finish it off."

Much needed rest for Heat

Game 4 on Tuesday night was the first grind-it-out matchup of this series; the Lakers won 102-96, both teams finishing the game with a series-low in scoring and Miami shooting a series-low 42.7% from the floor. Some of that could simply be defenses catching up with offenses, but it also could have been the toll of four highly competitive games taking place in a seven-day span.

"Our guys love competition and love the challenge," Heat coach Erik Spoelstra said. "We are here for a purpose. We never expected this to be easy. We'll just rest and recover. I think everybody could probably use that a little bit. Recalibrate, get back to work on Thursday."

Miami's Jimmy Butler has played more minutes than anyone in the series, averaging nearly 42 per game. The Heat have been barely able to take him out; Butler has logged 45, 45 and 43 minutes in his last three games, respectively—numbers nobody else in these finals have reached even once.

He isn't willing to show fatigue.

"Our confidence ain't going nowhere," Butler said. "It's going to stay high, I'm going to make sure that it stays high, because it's going to have to be at an all-time high to get this next win."

The Heat could use a couple days off from a health perspective. It remains unclear -- doubtful is probably the best word—if point guard Goran Dragic can play anytime soon because of the torn plantar fascia in his left foot. But getting All-Star center Bam Adebayo back from a neck injury for Game 4 was a plus, though he confessed he's not 100%.

"I feel like collectively we all need two days off," Adebayo said. "It's not just me, it's not just Goran, but we all need a couple days just to readjust, realign, get some fresh air and get back to the drawing board."

From the Heat perspective, that is indeed the case.

For the Lakers, the waiting may be the hardest part. The chance at the franchise's first title in 10 years is looming, and James—who has great respect for Spoelstra, his former Miami coach—is certain that the Heat won't go out easily.

"I know Spo going into Game 5," James said. "That's the best part about it. It's a chess match.

AFC members ready to ease back into international football

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—Tottenham star Son Heung-min isn't required for the South Korean national team's return from a COVID-19 enforced hiatus, so he can focus on the Premier League.

It'll be full domestic-based squads when South Korea and the South Korean under-23 teams meet Friday in the first of two games in Goyang, north of Seoul, in their return to action following the lockdown.

Japan is approaching its return in contrasting fashion, using only foreign-based players in its squad for international friendlies in the Netherlands against Cameroon and Ivory Coast. Because of travel restrictions and quarantine regulations, it would have taken players out of the J-League for too long if they'd been forced to assemble in Europe.

Had coronavirus not shuttered the world of sport in March, Asia would now be in the final stages of qualification for the 2022 World Cup. Instead, qualifying has been pushed back to 2021 and continental heavyweights are having to think outside the box to prepare for a full return to international competition.

With all arrivals in South Korea subject to 14 days quarantine, it was decided that Son, who has scored six goals for Tottenham in the first four games of the Premier League season, could stay in London for this international break. Lee Kang-in of Valencia and German-based star Hwang Hee-chan were also given leaves of absence.

Coach Paulo Bento can only use only home-based players, but he's grateful for the chance to get a squad together for the first time in 11 months.

"I'll use these exhibition matches as an opportunity to review some of the things we did in the past, and to help new faces get acclimated to our system," Bento said.

The Under-23 squad had been all set to compete in the Olympics in July, but the Tokyo Games were postponed for 12 months because of the pandemic.

"I think the players are also really excited to be here," Kim Hak-bom, head coach of South Korea's Under-23 squad, said. "Our fans have been thirsting for national team action, and we'll give them something to cheer about. My role as the under-23s coach is to keep developing young players and have them graduate to the senior team."

Japan has selected only European-based players for friendly games in Utrecht, Netherlands.

"We haven't been active for almost a year, so I want to reaffirm the fundamentals and unify our intentions," Japan manager Hajime Moriyasu said.

It is the first time that Japan has selected a roster made up completely of overseas-based players. It means that as well as Takumi Minamino of Liverpool and Sampdoria's Maya Yoshida, Moriyasu has called young talents such as Takefusa Kubo of Villareal in Spain and Yukinari Sugawara of AZ Alkmaar in the Netherlands.

"I'm incorporating some young and inexperienced players to help improve their level," Moriyasu said.

China is holding a five-day training camp in Shanghai, while Iran takes on Mali and Uzbekistan. Asian champion Qatar meets Ghana in other international friendlies.

Neymar doubtful

Brazil striker Neymar left Wednesday's training session early with back pains, which could force him to miss Friday's opening World Cup qualifier against Bolivia.

Brazil's team doctor Rodrigo Lasmar told journalists at the training ground in Teresopolis that Neymar had already started getting treatment but that it was too soon to say whether he'll be fit for the game at the Neoquimica Arena in Sao Paulo.

Footage published by Brazil's soccer confederation on social media showed Neymar putting his hands on his back and kneeling on the pitch.

Hurting Djokovic faces Tsitsipas in semis

AP

Serbia's Novak Djokovic plays a shot against Spain's Pablo Carreno Busta in the quarterfinal match of the French Open tennis tournament at the Roland Garros stadium in Paris, France, Wednesday, Oct. 7, 2020.

PARIS (AP)—The first obvious sign of trouble for Novak Djokovic came when he stepped out into Court Philippe Chatrier with a rather large square of beige athletic tape on the back of his neck.

The next indication came on the very first point of his French Open quarterfinal against Pablo Carreño Busta, when Djokovic let a ball toss drop and abandoned his serve mid-motion.

Soon enough, Djokovic was flexing and stretching his left arm or hitting it with his racket. Off to a slow start Wednesday night, Djokovic received massages from a trainer, righted himself and beat Carreño Busta, 4-6, 6-2, 6-3, 6-4 to reach the semifinals at Roland Garros for the 10th time.

"I definitely didn't feel great coming into the court today. A few things happened in the warmup," the No. 1-ranked Djokovic said, without going into specifics.

"I had some neck issues and some shoulder issues. I'll just say that. I mean, I don't want to get really too much into it. Obviously I'm still in the tournament, so I don't want to reveal too much. I'm feeling OK," said Djokovic, who will face No. 5 Stefanos Tsitsipas in Friday's semifinals. "As the match progressed, I warmed up my body, and the pain kind of faded away. It allowed me to play better and better and feel better."

He is right-handed, but the left side is important, too. He uses it for his two-fisted backhand and to throw the ball in the air on serves. Whatever impediment there was to his play, whatever the pain level might have been, the issue was, at the very least, a distraction.

Carreño Busta, for his part, had at least a bit of doubt about what was going on.

"Maybe it's the pressure or something. ... I mean, he continues playing normal, no?" the 17th-seeded Spaniard said. "I don't know if he's (in) pain really. ... Ask him."

This was a rematch from the U.S. Open last month, when Djokovic was defaulted for inadvertently hitting a line judge in the throat with a ball he smacked in anger. That went into the books as a loss and remains the only blemish on Djokovic's 36-1 record in 2020.

"I'm over it," he said. "I'm not thinking about it at all. I mean, zero percent."

Djokovic certainly does seem to have moved past that episode, winning all 10 matches he's played since.

He hadn't even ceded a set at Roland Garros until Wednesday. Now he'll get a day to recuperate as he seeks a second title in Paris and 18th Grand Slam trophy.

No. 2 Rafael Nadal faces No. 12 Diego Schwartzman in the other semifinal Friday. Nadal eyes a 13th championship at the French Open, which would give him 20 majors overall, equaling Roger Federer's record for men; Schwartzman never has played in a Slam semifinal.

In the women's semifinals Thursday, it'll be Sofia Kenin vs. Petra Kvitova, and Iga Swiatek vs. Nadia Podoroska.

Tsitsipas reached his first French Open semifinal with a 7-5, 6-2, 6-3 victory over 13th-seeded Andrey Rublev, taking control after trailing in the first set with a run of five consecutive games, and 11 of 13.

At the U.S. Open, Tsitsipas failed to convert a half-dozen match points in a third-round loss. Then, against Rublev in the final of the clay-court Hamburg Open on Sept. 27 — Day 1 of the French Open — Tsitsipas served for the victory but wound up absorbing another disheartening defeat. Two days later, in Paris, Tsitsipas lost the initial two sets of his first-round match against 109th-ranked Jaume Munar.

But Tsitsipas hasn't lost a set since.

"I'm chasing something spectacular," the 22-year-old from Greece said.

He'll need to get past Djokovic to continue the pursuit.

Against Carreño Busta, Djokovic manipulated his left arm. At changeovers, he rubbed it. He hit himself in the lower part of his biceps with the heel of his right hand. He pushed his left triceps against his sideline seat.

Demonstrative as ever, he smacked himself on his thighs with his racket or hung his head or leaned over with hands on knees after missed shots—and there were plenty of misses. The drop shots so successful for Djokovic all tournament were off-target. Getting serves in was difficult. He was hesitant with groundstrokes.

In the opening set, Djokovic accumulated three double-faults and a whopping 16 unforced errors—accounting for nearly half of Carreño Busta's 33 points.

At the changeover before the second set, Djokovic was attended to by a trainer, who returned for another massage three games later.

Maybe that did the trick, because from then on, Djokovic was a different player.

He had twice as many winners as unforced errors in the second set. He took nine of 11 games.

"The worst moment of the match for me," Carreño Busta said.

In the fourth, with the stadium's new retractable roof open, and a drizzle falling, Djokovic broke to 4-3, and Carreño Busta covered his head with a towel at the changeover.

Still, he didn't pack it in, earning chances to break back in the next game. Djokovic fended those off and was a game away from winning.

'CRANK'

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for another training camp, I hope to get something close to between four and six weeks of fight camp before the fight. I am hoping to get back to the cage later this year, get that second win after I won against COVID and finish strong," Camacho said.

The 31-year-old tested negative for COVID-19 last Sept. 24 and returned to Team Oyama gym in Irvine to get back to form. He worked out with his fellow Team Oyama fighters for a few week weeks while waiting for a call from UFC and his managing company, Iridium Sports Agency. It is unlikely that Camacho will get an early rebook, as UFC will have its next five events in Yas Island in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, and the Marianas fighter prefers to compete in Las Vegas.

"I am just glad that I am back home with my family and COVID-19 free. For now, I will keep up with my training here in Guam and work on my form," Camacho said.

Battle of the Warriors Part 2

If given a chance, Camacho would still want to face Weaver, whose nickname means "Choctaw warrior."

"It would really be interesting to have that Warrior vs Warrior fight. I am not sure what's the latest update on Brok, if he sustained an injury or not from his previous fight. I just hope we can work something out and finally have that battle of the warriors," Camacho said.

With Camacho out of the picture in last month's UFC Fight Night 177, Jalin Turner took his spot and the last-minute replacement fighter forced Weaver to submission (rear-naked choke) at the 4:20 mark of the second round. Turner dominated the bout, punishing Weaver with a combination of kicks and punches to the latter's face and body before going for a killer left hook that brought the Alabama native down and allowed the former to finish the bout on the ground.

If the Camacho-Weaver duel pushes through, the fight would still be considered as redemption for the two warriors, as they are coming off losing streaks. Weaver suffered back-to-back losses, as before bowing to Turner, he was also beaten by Roosevelt Roberts, incidentally via rear-naked chose, too in the second round (3:26) in UFC on ESPN 9 last May. Weaver has a 1-2 record in UFC, winning his debut in February after his foe, Rodrigo Vargas, as disqualified due to an illegal kick early in the first round.

Camacho, on the other hand, holds a 2-5 mark in the UFC and also dropped his last two matches (against Beneil Dariush and Justin Jaynes). Overall, the Team Oyama standout owns a 22-9 card, with 17 of his victories by TKO/KO.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

In this file photo, Frank "The Crank" Camacho trains in Guam. He is back on island and will prepare for his last fight this year.

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'Crank' eyes strong finish

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Frank "The Crank" Camacho spars with a fellow MMA fighter during a training session at Team Oyama Gym in Irvine, California last August.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Frank "The Crank" Camacho is back on island and will be continuing his training in Guam to get ready for the last fight in his contract with the Ultimate Fighting Championship.

Camacho, who came home yesterday from California, said he decided to return to Guam as his camp has yet to get confirmation about getting a rebook fight with UFC. The Marianas warrior was supposed to see action in the UFC Fight Night 177 in Las Vegas last month, but was pulled out from the fight card after he was tested positive for COVID-19 just a few days before his Sept. 12 bout against Brok "Chata Tuska" Weaver.

"As soon as we get a word on my next fight, I will head back to California

See 'CRANK' on Page 23

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Frank "The Crank" Camacho, front row second left, poses with other Team Oyama fighters after their training session.

Preparations for 2023 Pacific Games moving forward

After months of delay due to the COVID-19 pandemic, organizers of the 2023 Pacific Games are now making headway as far as preparations for the quadrennial competitions are concerned.

Host Solomon Islands has recently signed an agreement with Indonesian government-owned construction company PT Wijaya Karya to build a sports complex for the Pacific Games. The facility will be used for futsal, basketball, and volleyball tournaments with target completion date by Dec. 31, 2022. The cost of construction of the multi-purpose sports complex is pegged at $7.5 million.

The hiring of the Indonesian company for the construction of the 5,800-square meter facility came a few weeks after a delegation from China arrived in the Solomon Islands to start working on the National Stadium in Honiara. China is also funding the construction of the 10,000-seater stadium and majority of the costs (around $246 million) of the hosting of the Pacific Games.

Besides the National Stadium, the Solomon Islands will also build a new Olympic-sized swimming pool, five tennis courts, practice athletics track, and a hockey field to host the more than 2,000 athletes and officials participating in the Pacific Games three years from now.

The 2023 Pacific Games, which will run from July 14 to 28, will feature 16 mandatory sports—athletics, basketball (3x3 and 5x5), boxing, football, golf, judo, outrigger canoe, rugby 7's, sailing, swimming, table tennis, taekwondo, tennis, triathlon, volleyball (indoor and beach), and weightlifting. There are 21 optional sports and the events that will added to the mandatory list will be decided when the Pacific Games Council holds a general assembly early 2023. *(Saipan Tribune)*

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Construction of the National Stadium in Honiara Solomon Islands is supposed to be sponsored by Chinese-Taipei, but China has stepped in and will be shouldering majority of the costs of hosting of the 2023 Pacific Games.